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PULPIT PRAYERS

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PULPIT PRAYERS

BY

ALEXANDER MACLAREN

D.D., LITT.D.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

A SHORTHAND reporter, without the knowledge of Dr. Maclaren, took down many of his pulpit prayers. Dr. Maclaren, but with extreme reluctance, has yielded to my suggestion that they should be published. I am satisfied that many ministers will find them a great aid in their public devotions, and that they will guide others in the spiritual life.

W. ROBERTSON NICOLL.

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School of Theology
at Claremont

PULPIT PRAYERS

I

O LORD! Our Light and our Salvation, help us, we beseech Thee, to enter into, and abide in, the secret place of the Most High; and may the shadow of the Almighty be our covering defence. Help each of us to set our love upon Thee, to bring thoughts and affections and purposes to Thyself, to think as Thou dost teach us, to love as Thou hast loved us, to do and will as Thou dost command us, and so may we live in union with Thyself, and our word-worship in this place be in harmony with our consecration of life in our daily work.

We bless Thee that Thou dost permit us to gather together thus, to renew our drooping faith and love, and to see a little more clearly, in the calm leisure of these services, the things which it most concerns us to see, and of which we so often lose sight. We thank Thee, O Lord, that we may to-day bethink ourselves, and remember our dependence upon Thee, and Thy goodness to us.

We bless Thee that Thou dost speak to us in outward signs and services, as well as in the depths of our hearts, and by the monitions of Thy providences, as well as by the words of Thy grace, and the life and death of Thy dear Son. And we pray for ears to hear whatsoever God the Lord shall say to us. May the voice of our hearts ever be, 'Speak, Lord! Thy servant heareth.'

We thank Thee that we can bring all our imperfections to Thee, with the assured confidence that Thou wilt perfect that which concerneth us, if we cleave to Thee, and use the gifts so abundantly bestowed for our growth in likeness to Thyself. It is not in Thee that we are straitened, O Lord! and if, professing to be Thy servants, we present but little of the likeness of the Master, it is not Thy grace that fails, but our reception that is at fault. So we come to Thee, and confess before Thee those weaknesses and sins which we never feel more than when we are surest of the completeness of Thy love and of Thy goodness. And we pray that Thou wouldst cleanse us from all our evil, and make us more like Thyself, and bring us nearer to the image of Thy dear Son, and lead us into, and keep us in, the light, as Thou art in the light.

O Lord! Accept us as we come to Thee now. Receive our thanks for all Thy past mercies to us, and grant us Thy gracious presence and help in our worship now, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

II

O Lord! Our gracious Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast called us by the manifestation of Thine own glory and power in Thy Son. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to yield to that summons, and to draw near to Thee, and keep near Thee, that we may obtain from Thy divine power and infinite love all things which pertain to life and godliness. Give us, we pray Thee, the gifts needed by our weakness, and for the discharge of our duties, and the due profiting by all circumstances and events. Help us to keep our-

selves ever in the love of God, and more and more to subjugate all our thoughts and desires to Thyself and Thy holy will.

Guide us by Thy counsel in our daily work. May it never come between us and Thee, but be used by us for the purposes for which Thou dost appoint it, that thereby, we, brought nearer to Thyself, and with all our doings having Thee for their motive, their law, their aim, may have deeper fellowship with Thee for their result and reward.

We pray for Thy blessing to rest upon us in our worship of this morning. Guide Thou us, we pray Thee, when we try to meditate together upon Thy holy will and revelation. And let the working of Thy grace run and be glorified among us, and all our hearts and minds be affected and hallowed by the truth as it is in Jesus.

We pray for one another, in all the variety of our characters and conditions, and beseech Thee that in our various walks in life we may diversely pursue the one end, and may receive, according to the faithfulness which Thou dost enable us to exercise, the one gift.

We pray that if any of us are in sorrow Thou wouldst comfort and succour in all our trouble. Draw near to those who may be bereaved and desolate, to any from whom Thou hast withdrawn strong arms, and loving hearts, and let Thy servants thus exercised hear, in their very bereavements, the great Voice saying, 'Come up hither.' We thank Thee that Thou dost empty no places but with the purpose to fill them; and we beseech Thee that Thine own all-sufficiency may be realised by us all the more when those on whom we trusted may be taken from our sides.

We beseech Thee to guide us each in Thy great mercy and love, to bless all Thy children throughout the world, to prosper the message of Thy grace in every land and tongue, to grant that Thy holy providence may brood over the confusions of earth as it did over the primeval chaos, and out of darkness may bring light, and make confusion order.

We beseech Thee to hear us in our prayer; to grant us Thy gracious presence and help; and to accept and bless us now, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

III

ALMIGHTY and most loving Father! We bow before that 'mighty' and 'vast' command, and we draw near to that inexhaustible love, and beseech Thee that our fleeting being may be built on 'the Rock' of Ages, and so stand fast, like Thine, 'When rolling years shall cease to move.' Blessed be Thy name, we can come to Thee, Eternal and All-loving; and though we are the creatures of a day, we can share in the years which are throughout all generations. May none of us here live only for the things seen and temporal, but all of us have eyes cleared so as to behold and walk in the light of the things unseen and eternal.

Look upon us as we are gathered in Thy presence now. Help us in our worship. May our thoughts be fixed on Thee, and our desires go out after Thee. Help us in hearing and in speaking Thy word; and let all unfitness, whether of body or of mind, be

taken away by Thy gracious coming to us; that in this hour every one of us may feel that God Himself draws near to us, and that the voice of each of us may be, 'Speak, Lord! for Thy servant heareth.'

We beseech Thee to answer us now, and to give us the rejoicing sense of Thy presence and love, that our worship may be glad, inspiring, quickening, and complete, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

IV

O Lord, Who art Thyself the ever-blessed God, and with Whom are joys unspeakable and full of glory, grant, we beseech Thee, to each of us a portion in that changeless blessedness and deep tranquil gladness which comes to those who live in and near Thee. We have sought our delights too much amidst perishable and partial good. We have forgotten Thee, with Whom is all blessedness, and to know Whom is life eternal. And we would confess before Thee that we have indeed sought to hew out for ourselves many broken cisterns which can hold no water, and have too often turned away from Thee, the fountain-spring of living water. We pray for pardon for our folly; we pray for Thy help to cleave closer to Thee in time to come. Oh! if any of us are wandering, hungry and heartsore, amidst the vanities of life, do Thou recall us to the realities of Thyself, and fill our spirits, we pray Thee, with the peace which passes understanding, and with the joy which knows no end.

Look upon us all gathered here before Thee this evening. Thou! O Lord, knowest our needs, our characters, the motives that have brought us

together, the spirit in which we have come, the expectations that we have cherished. If these are unworthy, forgive them; if they are good, satisfy them. And whatever may have brought us into this place now, may we each of us here feel that God in His love, and Jesus Christ in His redeeming power, and the Divine Spirit in His life-giving energy, have been brought very near us. Oh! do Thou help us to speak in Thy name. What are we among so many? Do Thou, Lord! grant power to Thy word, and make it mighty, as it has been of old, to draw in men to Jesus Christ.

Bless each of us, in our various conditions and circumstances; be with us in our daily life and occupations. Whatever our hands find to do, may we do it with our might, and heartily, because we do it as for God. Do Thou keep us from the temptations of our callings, from the weaknesses of our characters, from the seductions of our circumstances; and do Thou help us, day by day, to 'press toward the mark,' 'forgetting the things,' and attainments, and shortcomings 'that are behind,' and 'reaching forth unto the things that are before.'

If any of us are in any special circumstances or difficulties, do Thou keep our feet, though they be in slippery places; and do Thou help us to realise, at all times and places, Thy presence, not as if in the sight of a tyrant Taskmaster, but as under the loving observation of a gracious Father. And may the remembrance of Thy presence, and the confidence of Thy help, minister strength and steadfastness to us. If our feet have wellnigh slipped, do Thou establish us on the Rock; and help us steadfastly to endure, if need be to resist, and, having overcome all, to stand

If any of us are in sorrow, the Lord comfort such. We thank Thee that our sorrows teach us Thy tenderness, and that Thou dost never darken our skies but in order that our dim eyes may see more brightly flaming the 'Pillar of Fire by night.' May all our troubles, great and small, lead us nearer to Thyself, and tend to make us more what Thou wouldst have us to be. Comfort and succour those who may specially need help and consolation; and be near us all, O Lord! for Thou knowest the variety of our conditions, which we know not; and Thou hast better purposes for us than our wishes for ourselves.

We would leave ourselves in Thy hands, and pray Thee to help us, day by day, to live noble, worthy, self-sacrificing, and Christlike lives, by the power of the great Saviour in Whom alone we desire to trust.

For His sake we beseech Thee to hear us, and grant us, now and always, Thy presence; and to prosper Thy word amongst us in the feeble ministrations of this evening.

V

O Lord, our merciful Father, with all gladness and confidence we would come to Thee as knowing Thine infinite mercy, and our all but boundless need. We thank Thee that Thou art near us to help and bless us; near us when we cry to Thee, and near us when we are far from Thee. We bless Thee for entrance into Thy very heart, and for the entrance of Thy very Spirit into us. And we beseech Thee that the union between Thee and us individually may be so close, real, and constant that we shall do nothing of ourselves; for

whatsoever we do of ourselves is out of the Life, and out of blessedness.

We beseech Thee, dwelling in our hearts, to purge all their corners, to refine all their affections, to cleanse all their desires. We beseech Thee that in Thy light we may see light; and walking ever in that light in which Thou art, may have the darkness which is in us conquered and scattered, and may be able, with purged eyes, to behold the things that are afar off; the things that are, and are for ever.

We beseech Thee that Thy wisdom may manifest all needful truth to us, both as regards belief and practice. We pray that in the little things of daily life we may be sure of Thy will, and may always be glad to apprehend and to do it.

We pray Thee to keep us from our own errors, from our own weaknesses, from our faults or defects of character, from the evil influences of our surroundings, from the temptations of our trades and professions; from everything in our daily life which, by reason of our own weakness, we pervert into a means of separation from Thee. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to so order all our activity, of both mind and hands, that it may tend to bring us closer to Thyself, and that in the midst of it we may realise fully and blessedly Thy strong sweet presence, Thy constraining grace, and Thy sustaining power. O Lord! may it be true of each of us that our souls follow hard after Thee, and then it will be true of us that our souls are satisfied as with marrow and fatness. Give us that satisfaction, we pray Thee, deeper, sweeter, fuller far, than anything that earth, creatures, or Time can yield. And help us that we may not waste our substance as prodigal sons and unfaithful stewards.

We pray Thee to look upon us gathered here in Thy presence now; and to shed upon us as a congregation, and upon each of us individually, the helpful spirit of Thy grace, that all our thoughts and desires now may be such as Thou canst sanction and satisfy, and that in our worship we may each of us be aware that we have come into God's presence; and may not fail to hear, nor, hearing, to welcome, and obey His, our Father's voice.

Hear us; grant us Thy blessing in our worship; forgiving our sins and leading us unto all truth and grace and blessedness, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

VI

O Lord! Who knowest all our need, and yet delightest that we should speak our necessities to Thee, we thank Thee that before we call Thou dost answer, and whilst we are speaking Thou dost hear. How much Thou hast given to us ere we asked it; how much Thou dost give to us the moment that we desire it! May we take the things that from the foundation of the world have been freely given to us of God, and joyously accept Thy mercies which, like the dew upon the grass, tarry not for the sons of men, even that greatest gift of Thine, the gift of Thy dear Son, which Thou hast bestowed upon us when we were dead in trespasses and sins. And do Thou help us, we pray Thee, to open our hearts for the reception, and the desire, of the great gifts which Thou art ever wont to bestow whensoever we seek Thee. Give Thy Divine Spirit to dwell in each of us, enlightening, and quickening, and cleansing, and making us know ourselves Thy children, and abiding in us as the earnest of the inheritance. We

pray Thee to give us all that we need, day by day, for life and godliness. And may we never thwart Thy gracious purposes by our indisposition to receive, and to profit by, Thy rich bestowments.

Look upon us, we pray Thee, in our worship of this morning; help us as we try together to draw near to Thee. Deepen our faith, O Lord! in Thy dear Son; and make us eager, both in hearing and in speaking, to receive and to treasure all Thy holy will. Speak Thou, O Lord! in us, and speak through us, and let the message of Thy love, and the great truths of Thy word, not lose by the human medium through which they pass. May all of us gathered here now yield our hearts in loyal love to the King of men. May all of us bring our sins to be forgiven, and our souls to be hallowed and saved, by the Christ the Saviour of the world.

We commend to Thee all whom we love; all who may be in any kind of sorrow or trouble. We beseech Thee to be very gracious and gentle with Thy suffering children, and to breathe Thy peace, as Thou only canst, into all troubled hearts, and help each of us, in our various difficulties, and any of us that may be in any special trial, or may bear any very heavy burdens, help us all to find strength and patience in submission, and in clinging close to Thy hand.

We commend all Christian people, in their various communions, and churches, and assemblies, to Thee, and beseech Thee that all who love Jesus Christ in incorruption may learn to love Him better, and may more fully represent to the world His lovableness and His grace.

We pray Thee to hear us in our petition, to bless us now; to be with us in our worship, to speak through

us and by us, and to grant to us all the light of Thy countenance, and the joy of Thy salvation, and the grace of Thine indwelling Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

VII

O LORD! our God and Father, Who art always near us, and ready to hear our lowest supplication, and to answer our feeblest desire, we would come to Thee this morning needy and weak, and cast ourselves on Thy great promises, and on the faithful love which has fulfilled these in the past.

We beseech Thee to help us to draw near to Thee now, and in the depths of our hearts may we turn to Thee and cling to Thee, and desire from Thee the greatest of gifts, the gift of Thy divine Spirit, to dwell in us. O Lord! we thank Thee that with all our weakness and deadness and sin Thou dost yet not disdain to enter into our hearts, and in their narrow and stained space to manifest Thy greatness, Thy transforming power, and Thy peace-bringing love. We beseech Thee that each of us, whatever may be the variety of our conditions and wants, may feel that we are really in touch with Thee, and that it is no vain thing either to speak to Thee or to listen to Thy voice to us. Give us, we pray Thee, more and more of that quiet confidence which rests in Thine infinite loving will, and recognises its workings in all the changing scenes around us. Give us, we pray Thee, the clear eyes which shall look beyond the changeful to the unchanging Cause of all, and may our lives in very deed pierce through the surface of things, and wrap their roots around the Rock of Ages.

We beseech Thee for grace and strength to believe in Thee thoroughly, to trust Thee wholly, to love Thee perfectly, to obey Thee implicitly, and to possess Thee in all the fulness and blessedness and calm of possession which are possible for us here and now.

O Lord! cleanse our hearts, we pray Thee, from all their clinging and deceiving affections turned towards earth. Deliver our minds from all errors and misunderstandings of Thy will, and of Thy revelation of Thyself. May we hear Thy voice speaking to us from every corner of the things visible, and from all the varieties of our daily lives. And may we walk thus in unbroken and blessed fellowship with Thyself and be made wise to know all that we need to know for life and godliness. Help us, O Lord, we pray Thee, in our daily living; there may we glorify Thee; there may we find the field for manifesting the true life that is in us; there may we be able to subdue all our own evil, and to take into our own hearts more and more of Thine all-sufficient good.

Forgive, we pray Thee, all our shortcomings and sins—teach us, O Father, anything wherein we may go astray. Hold us back from secret faults, from unknown transgressions of Thy holy will, and enlighten us that we may know better the whole compass and depth of that will. And do Thou help us that we may be delivered from all known transgression, and keep us back from every sin.

We beseech Thee to hallow our hearts; to draw near in the fulness of Thy grace; to forgive all that has been wrong in the past, and to establish, strengthen and settle us, in good and in union with Thyself; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

VIII

O Lord, our Father Almighty! Thou knowest our manifold needs; and we bless Thee that as a father pitieth his children, Thou pitiest them that fear Thee; and that Thou knowest better than we do how to give good things to them that ask Thee. We would covet earnestly the best gifts; and beseech Thee not only for outward and transitory blessing, but for that good part which shall not be taken away from us, by change, or time, or death.

O Lord! we need Thyself. It is from Thine own fulness that we must be satisfied. It is with Thine own life that we must live. It is Thine own righteousness that we need. Bestow Thou upon us, we pray Thee, some spark of that great fire, to burn within us, that we too, in our measure and degree, may be as our Father in Heaven, and show our sonship, by our likeness and our kindred.

We pray Thee to help us in our worship of this morning, and to teach us, when we try to speak Thy holy word; guiding our thoughts and shaping our utterance so as that Thy message may shine through our imperfect speech, and all hearts be conscious that God the Lord Himself has drawn near to them.

We pray Thee to help us in hearing, and in every part of our worship, and to grant that this day, here, and wherever the name of Christ and the glories of His gifts are set forth, there may be many hearts opening to receive the One, and to welcome Him as their King.

We beseech Thee, O Lord! that Thou wouldst bless each of us, in all our different duties and occupations

in life. Help us to make the calling wherewith we are called as a voice from God Himself to each of us. Help us to do our daily work as unto the Lord, that we may do it heartily. And do Thou give us joy in the act of obedience, and great reward in the keeping of Thy commandments. May all our avocations begun, continued, and ended in Thee, be for us the means of grace bringing us nearer to Thyself.

We pray for all the weary, the sorrowful, the afflicted, the desolate, the lonely. We pray for Thy servants who may be on beds of sickness; and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be near them and build around them a little sanctuary, and help them to feel that Thy arm sustains the wearied head. Come with strength and health to the immortal spirit, howsoever the flesh may faint and fail.

We beseech Thee to bless all Christian people in their various communities, and in their different work for Thee. And we pray that misunderstandings of one another, and of Thyself, may be growingly cleared away; and that all those who hold the Head may recognise the others who hold it as members in the one Body. Let the word of the Lord have free course amongst men, and magnify the grace which Thou hast sent. Recompense the sufferings of Him whom Thou hast sent, by 'giving Him the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.'

Hear us in our prayer, grant us Thy blessing as we worship here before Thee. Let Thy Kingdom come in our own hearts. May the service of this morning help us in some measure to accept more fully and rejoicingly the reign and dominion of Jesus Christ our King. We pray Thee to give us Thy blessing, and

help us as we wait in Thy presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord!

IX

GLADLY, O Lord, would we listen to Thy voice calling us to seek Thy face. And now we beseech Thee that from us seeking it Thou wouldst not hide. Help us to draw near to Thee, gathering in our thoughts, affections, and desires from the things that perish, and fixing them on Thyself Who art for evermore, and for evermore art our portion.

Give us, we pray Thee now, some closeness of felt union with Thee. May our hearts cleave to Thy great love; may our wills be submitted to Thine almighty commandments and appointments. May our thoughts be fixed upon Thee, in so far as Thou hast made it possible for our eyes to behold, and our feet to traverse, the Light which is inaccessible.

We pray Thee that Thou wouldst strengthen in us the desire to be wholly Thine, and in all the corners of our being to enshrine Thyself as Lord and Sovereign. May we trust in Thee with unshaken firmness; whatever difficulties, sorrows, perplexities, or darkness may stoop upon our path, may we realise how blessed it is to serve Thee in newness of spirit and not in the old bondage of the letter.

Do Thou help us, loving Thee, that we may rejoice in Thy commandments, and wear Thy yoke as our chiefest honour and our deepest joy. Give us, we pray Thee, day by day, strength to apprehend and to fulfil all Thy will, which it is needful for us to know. Do Thou teach us more and more what Thy good pleasure is, and bend and incline our hearts, by the

love which Thou didst shed abroad in them, that to us that will may be good and acceptable and perfect.

Forgive, we pray Thee, all our defects, shortcomings, and sins. Cleanse us from them all; show us more and more of what Thou wouldst have us to be; and to us may it ever be one and the same thing to know Thy will and to embrace and perform it. Forgive all past imperfections and wanderings and rebellions; and do Thou clear our eyes that we may look through the things seen and temporal, and may find in them helps and not hindrances to the acquisition and comprehension of the things that are unseen and eternal.

Look upon us, we beseech Thee, as we are gathered here in this service. We have come from different circumstances, with different duties and cares pressing upon us, with different characters and wants. Lord! Thou knowest us altogether; Thou knowest us better than we know ourselves. Thou hast more gracious purposes for us than our warmest wishes have ever formed for ourselves. We know not all which Thou dost mean to do with Thy children, but we bless Thee that we are sure that it is the best. And we would pray that whatever may be our present experiences, we may be able to rest peacefully in Thy holy will, and to do it bravely.

We pray Thee to comfort any of us that are in any kind of sorrow or trouble or trial. Draw near, as Thou hast promised Thou wilt, unto all bruised hearts, and manifest Thyself as the Physician who has the bandage and the balm which are needed. We pray Thee to comfort the sorrowful with the great consolations which abide with Thee. And we beseech Thee that we may never waste our sorrows, nor be insensible of their higher meaning. May none of us

have afflictions that have done us no good, nor be smitten by rods that do not blossom.

We beseech Thee to regard us according to our different necessities, to guide us all by Thy counsel. And forasmuch as Thou hast given unto men, in Christ's sole name and work, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and blessedness, may we each draw from that inexhaustible Fountain the Water of Life for our own lips.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, in our prayer; and in Thy great mercy manifest Thyself to us; and be with us now, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

X

O LORD! our gracious Father, look down upon us gathered here before Thee. Grant us Thy presence now, and Thy might to help, that in all our worship our hearts and minds may be very near to Thee and Thy truth; and influence us for good by the message of Thy love. Breathe Thy wisdom and Thy truth into the mind of the speaker; and let our lips be touched as with the live coal from the altar, that our iniquity may be purged and taken away. And let the same gracious influence be with all who hear, that no words spoken to-day, which are spoken in Thy power, and in accordance with Thy holy will, may fall upon unheeding ears and unreceptive hearts.

We beseech Thee to accompany all the service of Thy people in every land and language this day. Let the name of Jesus, the King of all lands and all languages, be dear to those who speak, and made dear to those that hear.

We commend one another to Thy care; we beseech

Thee to bless us each according to our necessities. Be near us in all our difficulties and sorrows, to guide us in all our paths, to show us Thy holy will, and to help us to perform it.

We beseech Thee now to hear us; to forgive our sins, and in Thy grace to accept us, through Christ our Saviour.

XI

O Lord, our God! We need Thee ever. We never need Thee more than when we try to draw near to Thee. Fill and flood our hearts, we beseech Thee, with the calm assurance that Thou art, and that Thou art the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Thee. And help us, now and always, to be of such diligent and trustful seekers after God.

We pray for Thy gracious presence to be manifested to us, that, drawn by its sweetness and the bliss of its light, we may turn away eyes and hearts from the deceptive and dying brightnesses of earth. May we know Thee enough to long after Thee; and longing, may we know Thee better; and enough to long more and to possess more. Give us now the gracious consciousness of Thy loving regard towards each of us; and whilst we come feeling the depth and the greatness of our own unworthiness, and of our many sins and shortcomings, may the great ocean of Thy love cover our sin, and bring to us the assurance that Thou art pacified towards us for all that we have done.

We lay ourselves before Thee, O Lord, and crave that we may possess, and may feel that we possess, the blessedness of the man in whose spirit there is no guile, because his iniquity is passed by, his sin covered, his

nature beginning to be changed. Draw us, we beseech Thee, by the assurance of Thy strong forgiving and cleansing power, and may we now come with the glad hearts, with the calm confidence, with the bounding joyfulness, that become those who have Jesus Christ for the answer to their desires.

We pray Thee to draw near to each of us as we are gathered in Thy presence, and let the light of Thy love shine very clearly in all our hearts. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to put away from ourselves whatever distractions and cares the past week may have brought to us, and if there have been anything in the ordering of our lives therein which unfits us for our fellowship with Thee now, O Lord, do Thou mercifully neutralise the poison, and bring us, we pray Thee now, in true self-surrender, and in deep earnest longing of faith, to Thy presence and footstool, that we may open our hearts in desire and may receive Thy blessings in their fulness.

Give us the joy of Thy salvation, the peace which passes understanding, enlightenment as to all that we need to know, patient acquiescence in all that remains unrevealed, hearts to grasp all the revelation of Thy love, and wills to bow to all the manifestations of Thy will.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst accept our praise for Thy many mercies to us, coming to us so abundantly day by day, punctually, as soon as we need them, and often anticipating our desires by Thy great gifts. Surely in small things of daily providence, as well as in the great thing of eternal salvation, before we call Thou dost answer, and whilst we are yet speaking Thou dost hear. Thou dost not always leave us to find out our necessities. Thou dost sometimes teach

us what we need by what Thou dost give. Thou dost surprise by bestowments, and prevent us by Thy great goodness; and most of all Thou hast not waited to be besought ere Thou didst send Thy Son. Thou hast not tarried for the sons of men to ask before Thou didst give that which they need, though often they know it not.

We pray that Thou wouldst help us to accept what is freely given us of God; and in the confident love that comes from experience of Thine august, undeserved, and unpurchased mercy, may we trust all lesser needs to Thy great and punctual care, and rest in Thee in peaceful assurance. We pray Thee to hear us now; in Thy mercy do Thou forgive, and in Thy great grace accept, bless, love, and pardon, and release each of us, through Christ our Saviour.

XII

O Lord! We thank Thee that Thy mercy, manifested of old, remains available for us. Thou hast forgiven in the past, that we may have a pattern of Thy long-suffering. And we come to Thee now, confident not only by the records of men that have been cleansed and accepted and redeemed from their sins, but by the record of that unfailing power to cleanse and accept which is treasured for all ages and for all hearts in Christ our Saviour. We pray that we may each for ourselves apprehend His great mission, who came into the world to save sinners, and humbly taking our places as such, may we pass into the light and liberty and joy of those who are accepted in the Beloved.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing as we are gathered here before Thee now, a company of sinful men, a

company of men saved, if we will, in Christ our Lord. We pray that each of us may this morning, for him and herself, draw near to that 'Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness,' and may find in the love and friendship of Christ all that we need. Shed abroad Thy blessing upon each heart, we pray Thee, as we wait in Thy presence. Give to us some message to speak that shall be in accordance with Thy holy will, and not altogether mar the beauty and the power of Thy gospel by its imperfect utterance. We thank Thee for that gospel of the glory of the blessed God. And we pray that it may so be proclaimed amongst us to-day as that all hearts may be constrained lovingly and sweetly to acknowledge the power that is in it, and yield ourselves to its power.

Do Thou regard each of us in all our variety of character and circumstance. Guide us by Thy counsel in all the ways by which Thy providence appoints that we should walk; and help us, in each of them, to find that the path of righteousness is the path of peace and leads straight into the secret place of the Most High. Then may we be able to unite together the calmest contemplation and the most strenuous action, nor have our lives broken into fragments, sometimes working in the world and for it, and sometimes withdrawing to gaze for a moment upon Thee. May all our work be worship, and all our worship be work. May we be able to solve the great difficulty, and whilst we see Thy face, to serve Thee day and night.

And we pray that if any are in sorrow or trouble Thou wouldst help all such to cast all their burdens upon the strong burden-bearing God, and to give all their anxiety up to Him that is concerned for them. We pray Thee to give Thy consolations to all sad

hearts, Thy companionship to all solitary ones, Thy rest to all toilers, Thy calm to all the troubled. We pray for our Sovereign and our country, and for all the nations upon earth, that in them the name of Jesus Christ may be magnified, and that the kingdoms of the world may become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ.

We beseech Thee to bless all Christian people, all communities of such, and all their work in the world, imperfect in motive and poor in measure as it may be. The Lord visit all the thousands of Israel, and give to every faithful messenger and witness for Jesus Christ the abounding joy of His felt presence, and the assurance that his labour, if it be in the Lord, can never be in vain.

We pray Thee to hear us, graciously to accept us, to grant us now Thy presence and help, for Christ our Saviour's sake.

XIII

Help us, O Lord! to come to Thee with the ceaseless thanks and the infinite love which Thine unexampled mercy and Thy changeless and unspeakable love to us demand. We bless Thee that Thou dost require because Thou hast given, that Thou dost not seek to reap where Thou didst not sow, nor to gather where Thou didst not straw; but Thou art first in all things, and Thou hast lavished the treasures of Thine own deep heart upon us ere Thou hast asked us to give Thee ours. Oh! touch our spirits, we beseech Thee, that we may come into closer fellowship with Thee, and understand and feel more deeply than we ever have done how wondrous that love which Thou hast commended to us,

'in that, whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' In the strength of that great Name we draw near to Thee. We are prodigal sons, but our Elder Brother has come into the wilderness, and the far land, to seek us, and has brought us back, and delights to share with us in all His possessions; and He has all that are Thine. We beseech Thee for the riches, for the wisdom, for the peace, for the joy, for the righteousness, for the power that are stored for heart and mind and will and life in Jesus Christ our Saviour. And we pray that being taught by faith, and made capable of receiving by love and surrender, more and more of His divine fulness may flow into our hearts, and more abundant measures of His life may ever growingly be ours. Unite our hearts in that love of Thy name which is full of reverence, in that fear of Thy name which dwells with love.

And help us, we pray Thee, to render to Thee, not only the tribute of thought and word and desire and praise now, in this place of prayer, but when we get into the turmoil and struggle of life, and amidst all the pettinesses of our daily tasks, and the annoyances that sometimes beset us then and there. Lord! may we yield ourselves to Thee, and render to Thee the tribute of loving hearts, and obedient wills, and diligent and wisely-guided hands.

We thank Thee for Thy great promises to all that put their trust in Thee; and we would come now, unworthy and poor as we are, to ask our portion in our Father's fulness. Give us, we pray Thee, the portion that falls to us, and keep us from wasting it either as prodigal sons or as unfaithful stewards. May we use all Thy gifts with resolute consecration, and clear-sighted direction of our work for Thyself, and in

whatsoever we do may we be aware of Thy furthering hand, and be sure of Thy prospering favour.

Lord! look upon us as we are gathered before Thee now. We thank Thee that we are permitted thus to unite in Thy worship. We pray that Thou wouldst open our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of Thy law; and open the treasures of wisdom which are hid for us in Jesus Christ; that we may all learn of Him, and take Him for our Master and our Guide.

Help us in our praises and our prayers, in our reading of Thy word, in our humble endeavours to speak in Thy name; and let all parts of this service be full of the Divine Spirit. And may man's words sink into insignificance, and the voice of the Lord be heard by us all.

We beseech Thee to be near us now; to forgive our many sins, to answer these our poor petitions, and to forgive the imperfections and the faithlessness of our prayer; accepting it and us in the Beloved.

XIV

O Lord! our God and Father, we thank Thee for that message which is for all the broken-hearted, and for that great love which transcends all the limits of Thine ancient people, and has overflowed in its fulness unto us. And we beseech Thee that our first emotions of witness-bearing to the gracious words which proceed out of Christ's mouth may never pass into enmity, or darken into violence and hatred. Help us, Lord! to listen to the voice which bears witness to Thy Son, and to listen to Him Who bears witness of Thee and of Himself and of us. And strengthen us, we beseech Thee,

that in all our ways we may follow Him absolutely, and rejoice in Him perfectly. Guide each of us, we beseech Thee, according to all the variety of our conditions and circumstances and characters; and lead every one of us by paths which, by Thy gracious help and our own diligent treading, shall lead us unto Thyself. May none of us prefer the broad and flowery path to the narrow and thorny. May we all seek first to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. And whatsoever Christ says may we accept, and whatsoever Christ commands may we obey.

Bless us in our daily work; there may we find it blessed to remember Thee, and to devote the labour of our hands to Thyself. Keep us from everything which we cannot so devote, and in all doubtful things do Thou guide us, and show us the path in which Thou wouldst have us to walk.

If Thou hast appointed for any of us dark and trying ways, or hast laid upon any of us the sad fate to walk solitary here on earth, do Thou be near us that we may have a Companion Who cannot change, nor pass, nor die; and that we may have consolations and joys more abundant than the most abundant and darkest of our sorrows.

Help us, we pray Thee, rightly to use all our changing circumstances; and may Summer and Winter alike help to ripen the perfect fruit of lives conformed, and wills submitted, and hearts devoted unto Thee.

We pray Thee for Thy blessing in our worship now. We beseech Thee to take away all unfitness from hearers and from speaker, and to grant wisdom and grace both in the utterance of what we would fain make the pure utterance of Thy pure word, and in the reception of Thy messag-

The Lord be with us, and bless us; the Lord keep us each and watch over us; the Lord help us to live to Him, and by Him; and give us grace of patience and perseverance, and a good hope, until He shall call us to live with Him for evermore.

Hear us in our prayer, we beseech Thee, and in Thy mercy answer and bless us, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

XV

O LORD! our Helper and our Home, we would come to Thee again this morning, and draw near to that Presence which we have often found to be full of light and joy and peace and power. We would lift up our hearts to Thee, for they are weary of wandering amidst the shadows of earth. And we would turn to Thee from all broken cisterns, that we may find in Thee the reality and the fulness of all which we need.

We do believe that when we possess Thee, and feel the touch of Thy love, we are at rest. We have made the experience that rest is nowhere else. And yet, O Lord! Thou knowest how weak we are, and how we are constantly renewing the experiments which have already failed in our hands, and trying to make for ourselves homes and shelters where there are none. But we would come to Thee now, and press into the secret place of the Most High, that there we may have peaceful rest under the shadow of the Almighty, and be preserved from every foe and every evil. Beneath the shadow of Thy wings, O Lord! we would flee for refuge. Thy faithfulness is our shield and buckler. Alas! for us, that we have so often sought for other defences, and find them penetrable by all the arrows of our foes.

To Thee we would return. We pray for Thy pardon for our folly. We pray for the confirmation and deepening of all true thoughts of Thee and Thy sufficiency. We pray that our experience in daily life may confirm Thy promises and our faith.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst deliver us, and set us on high because we have known Thy Name. We pray Thee to help us to set our love upon Thee. We pray Thee that we may more and more realise the privilege and exercise the power of calling upon Thee at every moment of need. And we ask that our petitions may bring swift answers in the very time of our necessities, and that whilst we are yet speaking Thou wouldst hear.

Look upon us, we pray Thee, gathered here before Thee now. We thank Thee for all the mercies which have led us up into Thy house to-day. We bless Thee for the assurance of still greater benefits which meets us when we gather together thus, and lift up our hearts to Thee. We pray that Thou wouldst reveal to each waiting heart the fulness of Thy love, and the power of Thy presence.

Lord! draw near to every one of us, according to our different necessities of character and condition this morning, and manifest Thyself to us. For all the weary be Thou repose and refreshment; for all the sorrowful manifest Thou Thy consolation. And let the Pillar burn the brighter the darker stoops the night upon any of our paths.

To all the solitary draw near as the Companion that makes up for the absence of all beside. For any that are in perplexity do Thou disclose Thy purposes and their path. Strengthen us for all our work; lay upon hearts and consciences the clear

vision of our duties, and make us willing to accept and to discharge them. May we find Thee waiting for us in all the various departments of our lives. And may all our work, of whatever sort it is, be offered up to Thee, and by Thee be furthered and prospered.

We pray Thee to look upon us gathered here in Thy presence this morning, to accept our humble thanks for all Thy manifold mercies and blessings towards us. 'Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.' For all Thy loving-kindness, Thy deep and wise providence, Thy tender care, receive our praise. And may we never leave Thy mercies forgotten, nor waste them by unfaithful reception of Thy great goodnesses.

Lord! hear us in our prayer; draw near to us as we bow before Thee; forgive our many sins; and help us this day that our worship may be acceptable unto Thee, and full of blessings and answers of peace to us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XVI

O Lord! our Father, we thank Thee for that sure foundation which is laid, on which may the Lord give us all grace to build, and to build precious things which shall stand the declaring and trying fire.

We beseech Thee to help us in all our lives, to connect our wishes, aims, efforts, and all our hopes and desires with Jesus Christ and His great Name and will. Whatsoever we do may it be done as for Him and by Him. And as we travel on through life may we by patient continuance in well-doing build course by course the temples of holy lives for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Forgive, O Lord! we beseech Thee, all that has been amiss in our past, our many acts of unthankfulness, our often forgetfulness of Thee, and of Thy will, the follies that have led us away from Thee, the vain attempts to find refuge in others than Thyself. Forgive the coldness of our love, the wavering of our faith, the irresolution of our past desires, the poverty of our service, and the mingled motives that have blended with our purest aspirations. And do Thou help us, O Lord! we beseech Thee, to press nearer to Thee, and to live more fully, deeply, constantly in communion with Thyself; that, even whilst we are engaged in the many duties which Thou dost lay upon us, our homes may still be in Thy temple, and that we may blend together action and contemplation, beholding Thee ever in Thy sanctuary and yet labouring for and with Thee in the world.

We pray Thee to help us as we are gathered here now, and to give us some message from Thyself which may come to all our hearts and minds as a true word of the living God. And may it be treated there as Thy words ought to be. Prosper the ministry and message of all Thy servants throughout the world to-day, in whatever land or in whatever communion true men may be labouring for Thee and for their fellows. The Lord bless them a thousandfold, and make the number of such many more than it is.

We pray for all Christian people of every congregation and sort. We ask Thee to draw all Thy children nearer to Thyself. We beseech Thee that Thy great Word may be the more firmly believed, more lovingly searched, more deeply understood, more completely practised and obeyed in the hearts, and minds, and lives of all professing Christians. And we beseech

Thee that it may spread throughout the earth, and be recognised everywhere for what it is, the Word that shall make all crooked things straight, and all rough places plain.

We commend one another to Thy care. We bless Thee for all Thy mercies to us as a congregation in times that are past. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst still be with us and prosper us. Be near us in all our work, and grant that it may be less unworthy of that blessing which we dare to ask upon it.

Be with each of us in our different homes, and professions and duties. Guide us all by Thy counsel, and help us to make the most of life, filling it full of service for, and aspiration after, Thee.

We beseech Thee to bless any of us that are in any special sorrow or trouble, to be near all such hearts, and to comfort and succour them.

We pray for all the weary, the oppressed, the wanderers, the sinful who have forgotten Thee, the outcasts for whom no man cares. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst make Thy professing children more tender of heart, more active, generous, and Christlike in their relations to the world.

And now, O Lord! accept us as we draw near to Thee, forgive our sins, quicken us and help us to call upon Thy Name, knowing that Thou hearest always when we call, and present our prayers, through Jesus Christ our Divine Saviour.

XVII

O Lord, our God! Who hast taught us by many a mercy, and by all Thy providences, to think of Thee as perfect wisdom and perfect love, help us, we beseech

Thee, now, to bring our whole hearts to Thee, and to rest our whole weight upon and to cast all our burdens upon Thy strong arm, and so find perfect peace.

We would trust in the Lord and do good; we would delight ourselves in Thee. But we have to confess that our wayward hearts have often sought after other delights, and hewed out for themselves broken cisterns; and so our hearts' desires being wrongly set, have been disappointed. May we learn the lesson, and set our affections on the things above, that change not nor ever deceive. We would commit our way unto Thee, for surely it is not in man that walketh to direct, as well as to tread, his path, and when we choose for ourselves we are dangerously apt to choose wrong. Keep us from preferring paths of pleasure to the ways of duty; and help us to leave all that nearest future in the same hands to which we have to commit the furthest future. Surely He whose good pleasure it is to give us the kingdom at the last will not forget to give us what we need as we journey thither.

So, Lord! we would come to Thee now with humble trust in Thy great mercy, and pray that that trust may be deepened and perfected, and that Thou wouldst deliver us from all carking care, from all competing delights, from all self-regard and self-pleasing, and strengthen us to live that life of faith which is the life of peace.

O Lord! look upon us as we are gathered here in Thy presence, and do Thou shed abroad upon our hearts the quickening, strengthening, calming influences of Thy heavenly grace. We bless Thee that we can gather thus and derive from outward things help for the true devotion of soul and spirit. We

are very weak, and we need the aid of these outward objects of sense, and we depend much upon associations and habits and companionships. We bless Thee that we have all these unsolicited on the side of Thy service, and of our drawing near to Thee in these public acts of worship and sense. Thou hast appointed them. We look to Thee to bless them, remembering, as many of us can do, past days when we have found Thee and been found of Thee in the worship of Thy house.

We bless Thee for all that is past, and pray Thee that Thou wouldst still be near us, and help us this morning. Lift away the weary burden from our souls. Clear and purge our hearts and purposes of any evil and sinful things. Withdraw us from the distractions, and may we not grudge giving our whole hearts and minds to God for this one hour of prayer.

Be near us all, we beseech Thee, and bless and keep us in Thy love, and compass us about with the manifestations of Thy presence, and fill our hearts with the light of Thy rising upon them.

We thank Thee for all past blessings. We beseech Thee still to be near us, and to give us day by day according to our daily necessities.

And now, Lord! we pray Thee to accept and keep us, to hear and answer us, to forgive and hallow us, and to perfect that which concerneth us; through Jesus Christ our Saviour and our Hope.

XVIII

O Lord, our Father, we beseech Thee that we may learn to know Thee in Thy revealing Son, and coming

to Him with all our toils and our burdens, may we receive from Him the rest which He and He alone can give.

We bless Thee that all may receive that light, for all, though they may not be amongst the wise and prudent, may be amongst the babes. And we ask Thee that Thou wouldst help us to think so humbly of ourselves, and so lovingly and trustfully of Thee, that we may be capable of receiving the light which Thou dost give to all the simple in heart who know their darkness and feel after Thyself.

We beseech Thee to help us in our worship of this morning; that Thou wouldst guide our thoughts when we try to speak in Thy Name, and that Thou wouldst incline our ears to hear the word which God the Lord shall speak unto us. We bless Thee that Thou dost permit us to come time after time into contact with Thy truth and with Thyself revealed in Thy truth. May our familiarity therewith never deaden us to the greatness and the blessedness of Thy word. And may we never substitute our familiar acquaintance with Thy message for our reception of that message.

We pray Thee to bless us each gathered before Thee now, and to guide us according to all Thy wise purposes, in the various paths in which Thy providence calls us to travel. May they all lead us to Thee, and may we use the ever-changing circumstances of this life, whether it be duty or delight or disaster, for the one purpose of bringing ourselves nearer to God. So, Lord! help us to pass through these things temporal that they may be our guides into the possession of the things eternal.

Bless each of us in our daily life. Direct us all by Thy wise counsel. Help us to be quick to receive every

monition of Thy providence, and every whisper of Thy Spirit. And do Thou help us, in all that we do, to set the Lord before us that we be not moved.

We commend one another to Thy care. We pray Thee to convert all Thy people, and to guide and help them in their witnessing work for Jesus Christ. And we ask that His Name may be as ointment poured forth, filling the whole house of earth with the fragrance of the ointment.

We beseech Thee to hear us now, to grant us Thy blessing in our worship, to forgive our imperfections and our sins, and to prevent these from marring our reception of the blessings of this service; through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

XIX

We thank Thee, O Lord! that we can believe that 'the Saviour of the world is here.' And we beseech Thee that we all may open wide our hearts, and welcome the entrance of Him Who brings into the humble hearts in which He dwells, His hands full of blessings of life and love and light.

O Lord! draw near to us this evening, gathered as we are, to seek Thy face. And grant that whatsoever mingling of imperfect motives may have brought us together, and however unprepared our hearts may be to receive the blessings which Thou longest to bestow, we may not go empty away. Let Thy grace be manifested among us; the fulness and the freeness of Thy pardoning and hallowing love. And draw near to each heart that the outward forms may become realities, and the poor word of a brother man may become the word of the living God. Hear

us, O Lord! in our petitions; forgive our many sins, and grant us Thy gracious help as we worship now; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

XX

O LORD! our gracious Father, whose tender mercies are over all Thy works, whose tenderest mercy comes to Thy sinful children, we draw near to Thee in that great Name which is above every name. And we beseech Thee that we, in our inmost hearts, every one of us, may crown Jesus as our King and Lord.

We thank Thee for all that He has done to win us for Himself. We thank Thee that the Word has become flesh and dwelt among us. We thank Thee for all the ministration of His life, and all the graciousness of His words and works. And we bless Thee that He hath shown us the Father, and scattered for ever the doubts and fears that spring in guilty hearts.

But most of all, we praise Thee that He has died for all, and therefore is King of all. And we beseech Thee that we may each of us be moved by His great mercy, and may yield ourselves to be His subjects and servants all our lives.

O Lord! we thank Thee for all the blessedness and the dignity and the peace which come to those who take Christ's yoke upon them. We ask that none of us may stiffen our necks and turn away our shoulders from that sweet load, nor refuse to bend our wills to that blessed obedience. If there are any of us who have wandered far from Thee, may the strong drawings of Thy love bring them back again; and this evening may the Master's own great words be magnified and verified amongst us, that He, lifted up, will draw men

unto Him. Do Thou help us in hearing and speaking Thy word, and give to us some message from Thyself which may be recognisable by all as 'the truth as it is in Jesus.' And lay that word, we beseech Thee, upon the heart of the speaker as of the hearers, that we together may rejoice in the common salvation, and together exercise the common faith.

Guide each of us, we pray Thee, according to all the variety of our wants and characters and circumstances. If there are any of us in sorrow, the Lord be very near to such, and bless and succour them! We thank Thee that Thou art wont to brighten the pillar into a pillar of fire when darkness stoops upon our path; and that Thou dost never send any sorrow but as Thy forerunner, that it may prepare the way for the entrance of Thy abundant consolations. May all of us who are in any way afflicted, in mind, body, or estate, find that these things are so; and that God is nearer to us in the darkness than our poor eyes were able to see Him when dazzled by other lights.

And if there are any of us who are struggling with temptations and difficulties the Lord be near to all such, and give them grace to stand, and power to lay hold of the one Hand that steadies our feet upon the rock, and establishes our goings.

We commend one another to Thy care. We beseech Thee to bless all whom we love, wherever they are, and whatever their needs. We pray that Thou wouldst accept the many sacrifices and incense of prayer that have gone up this day to Thee; and pray that upon all hearts who have sought Thy face there may shine, lambent and blessed, the light of Thy countenance.

The Lord hear us, the Lord be with us this evening;

the Lord help us to hear and to speak, and give His Spirit to make the word which is the Spirit's prosper effectually in the thing whereto Thou hast sent it.

We ask all through Him from Whom we receive all, to Whom we would render all, even Christ our Saviour.

XXI

O Lord! our gracious Father, Who keepest truth to a thousand generations, and forgivest iniquity and transgression and sin, look on us in love and pity as we gather before Thee now, a company of sinful people, needy and weak, who require Thy help, and often reject it.

Draw near to us, we beseech Thee, that we may draw near to Thee, and show to us something of the sweetness and blessedness of Thy fellowship and love, that our sluggish desires may be kindled to long for more of that which is our only satisfying good, even Thy presence, and the common assurance that Thou art our Friend.

We come to Thee with many faults and weaknesses. We, too, have made for ourselves idols to which we have ascribed far too often what belongs to Thee only. We, too, have forgotten Thee, and have been ready to turn aside from Thy ways, even whilst the mount has been blazing with fire in our sight. We beseech Thee for Thy pardoning mercy, and pray that such visitations as may be for our good may follow upon our sin, that we may be weaned therefrom and taught by bitterness, if not by joy, how sinful and how fatal a thing it is to depart from the living God.

O Lord! look upon us, we beseech Thee, as we are gathered here before Thee, and give us some

quickening and glad sense of Thy friendship and Thy power, that we may walk in the light howsoever we have brought our darkness to it. Scatter Thou, we beseech Thee, all thoughts and desires, all anxieties and perplexities, all solicitations of earthly good which may come between us and Thee. And help us this morning, with all our hearts, with all our souls, and strength, and minds, to yield ourselves unto Thee, and to enter into the communion and the blessedness of this hour of prayer.

We thank Thee for all the helps which our sluggishness finds, even in outward things. We bless Thee that the associations of this day, and the memories of this place, and the companionship of each other, can help us to draw near to Thee. We pray that these things which Thou dost give us to be helps may never be hindrances for us, nor may our souls ever rest in them, and so fail to travel beyond them to what they mean and whither they lead.

We ask Thee that that risen life which all Thy servants throughout the world are this day remembering, may be granted to each of us, and that we may indeed be partakers in Christ's Resurrection. And as He hath died to sin, and liveth unto God, so may we too count the past sufficient to have wrought the will of the flesh, and henceforth more earnestly and constantly, and with fewer departures from Thee, work Thy will, possess Thy favour, and drink in of Thy life and spirit. To this end, O Lord! help and bless us in our worship now, and shed abroad upon each heart waiting before Thee the needful gifts and graces, that all of us to-day may indeed have our fellowship with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ. We ask all, and we bring ourselves, and the

whole burden of our sin and weakness, to be dealt with according to Thine infinite goodness and mercy, treasured for us in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XXII

O LORD, our Father! we thank Thee that Thou, by Thy faithful word, hast filled for us the dim darkness of the future with the glorious visions of the City of God. And we beseech Thee that all of us here, forsaking the working of abomination and everything that defileth, and having our names written in the Lamb's book of life, may, when we pass through the iron gate of death, that openeth of its own accord, find ourselves in the City.

We bless Thee for such hopes. We bless Thee for that great Sacrifice and Life which change hopes into certainties, and give to us the full assurance that so it shall be. And we beseech Thee that in the strength of that rejoicing confidence we, as Thy servants, may all live rightly understanding the bearing of the things that are seen and the things that are unseen, and so handling those which are nearest us that they may further and secure our possession of the greater.

We pray for Thy grace to be with us in all the various circumstances and occupations of life. Guide Thou us, O Lord! by Thy counsel, and make us docile to hear and to submit to that guidance. May nothing in our own hot desires, nothing in our own faithless hearts, obscure to us what the Lord would have us to do and to be. May we gain wisdom and furtherance from all our daily occupations, and in everything may we behold revealed to us the Father's heart, and all that we do may we do it heartily, as unto the Lord.

Comfort and succour, we pray Thee, sad hearts amongst us; be near to all such. Make Thou Thyself the Companion of the solitary and the light to them whom darkness wraps. 'The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee,' but to us it is sometimes easier to know Thee and see Thee in the dark than in the light of prosperity. So, Lord! bless with that inward vision all of us whose lives on earth may be darkened; and grant that we may be able to look beyond to 'the rest that remaineth for the people of God.'

We commend one another to Thy care. We pray Thee to bless all good people who are trying to make the world better, and to win it more fully for Jesus Christ its King. We ask that all Thy servants may have understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; and that Thy people may be more concerned to bear that witness in the world for which Thou dost keep them in the world. We beseech Thee to accept us now, to give us Thy blessing in our hour of worship, to direct us when we try to hear and to speak Thy holy word, to forgive all our imperfections and sins; and not to let these hinder us from getting some lasting good from this day's meeting.

We ask Thee to bless us all, to remember all Thy servants throughout the world who are seeking to spread the Name of Christ; to let His Kingdom come, and the great Name which is above every name be written upon all hearts, and become as odour poured forth, that the house of earth may be filled with its fragrance.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, in our prayer, and grant us Thy blessing now and always; for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

XXIII

O LORD, our God! we would lift up our hearts to Thee, and pray Thee for help to rise above all that may bind us down here, that we may enter into the secret place of the Most High and there find rest, our home, life and joy.

We thank Thee for Him Who is ascended up on high, and pray that our lives may, in their deepest root, be hid with Christ in God. Oh! help us, we beseech Thee, this day, to be partakers of Christ's Resurrection, and to rise from every death of sin and worldliness, and to enter with Him into the Holiest of all; and with Him to sit at Thy right hand.

We bless Thee that even whilst we are here engaged in the duties, and learning the lessons, and submitting to the discipline of this earthly life, Thou art preparing us for the rest and the perfectness of the Heavens. Grant, O Lord! we beseech Thee, that this morning we may all draw very near to Thee, and feel that it is no vain thing thus to gather, but that truly we may draw near to God, and God Himself draws near to us. How many mercies bring us to Thy presence, how many necessities drive us thither! How full of imperfection our lives have been, and of needless care, and of gratuitous anxieties, and waywardnesses, and wanderings, and backslidings, Thou knowest! And we beseech Thee to help us to know how full they have been of Thy mercy, and the revelations of Thy love, and the unveilings of Thy heart, and the messages of Thy will; how full of cheer and comfort, of correction and instruction from Thyself ministered by our daily providences and our ordinary mercies, ministered by our losses and disappointments, and most of all by the

revelation of Thy grace in Jesus Christ, and by the whispers of Thy Spirit in our hearts we partly know. And we would be wholly thankful for them all. We beseech Thee that Thy lavish gifts to us, and Thy daily carefulness over us, may not be wasted, but that all which befalls us, of whatever sort it is, may have the one end, as it has the one source. And since all comes from Thy love, and is meant to make us partakers of Thy holiness, may all work together for good to us since we love God, apprehend His will, and in love seek to perform it.

Look upon us, we beseech Thee, as we are gathered in Thy presence. Forgive the many sins that hinder us from entering into the full blessedness of this hour, and drawing from it all the good that it is meant to convey. And do Thou help us as we wait before Thee, that whatever of clinging to earth, and occupation with passing thoughts and cares we may have brought into Thy house, may pass away from us; and that we may be able only to remember our needs and our anxieties, and our daily work, in so far as the remembrance may make our clinging to Thee the closer, and our cry to Thee the more earnest.

Shed abroad Thy grace upon all our hearts. Touch our spirits, O Lord, and our lips and hearts, as with a live coal from the altar of sacrifice. And help us this morning to enter deeply and joyfully into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and the community of Christ's risen life.

We beseech Thee to hear us, to look upon us as we are assembled together, to lift away from us every weight and burden, to remove from between us and Thee every barrier and hindrance, and to help us all to enter into and to possess the full flow of Thy love,

and of all Thy gracious gifts by which Thou dost confirm and quicken the souls that wait upon Thee.

Hear us in our prayers, we beseech Thee; grant us Thy gracious help and Thy continual presence; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XXIV

O Lord! our God and Father, we bless Thee that we can call upon Thee as our Father; and we thank Thee that we know that our Judge is our Father. May we not forget that our Father is our Judge. And whilst we draw near to Thee with love and confidence may we pass the time of our sojourning here in fear; and have ever in our hearts that holy reverence which shall deliver us from all dread.

We draw near to Thee now in that great Name which is above every name, and beseech Thee that Jesus Christ may be to us indeed the unseen but ever-present object of faith and hope and love and desire; and that in Him we may find the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. We thank Thee that such gladness may last on through all changes, and may live triumphant in the midst of sorrow. We bless Thee that there are no afflictions which come to us of which there is no need, and we pray that our faith tried thereby may be purged thereby, and may be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

If there are any of us, O Lord! gathered in Thy presence at this time who specially need Thy sustaining and comforting power, we pray that such may receive in abundance according to their need; and may open their hearts to receive that which Thou dost so

freely give. Grant, we pray Thee, that all things which befall them and us, however bitter and sad, may turn to sweetness, and contribute to joys, because they are received as from a loving Father's hand. Help us all to submission which brings peace. Give us all the peace which passes understanding.

We pray Thee to strengthen us for all our work of whatever kind it is, and to keep us from engaging in any pursuits, or cherishing any wishes on which we cannot ask and expect Thy blessing, and in which we cannot look for Thy furtherance.

We pray that Thou wouldst guide us all by Thy counsel, and preserve us by Thy grace; that Thou wouldst help us day by day to walk worthily of the great calling wherewith Thou dost call us and to adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour in all things thankfully. We acknowledge Thy many mercies gratefully; we receive whatsoever gifts Thine open hand bestows unmurmuringly. We would desire to submit to all which Thou dost appoint of withdrawal and loss, and beseech Thee that whatsoever comes and goes, our possession of Thee and our assurance of doing Thy will, and enjoying the light of Thy countenance, may have no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, in our prayer, bless all whom we would remember and bear in our hearts at Thy throne. Comfort all that are sad, enlighten those that sit in darkness, bring again wandering and rebel children to the allegiance and the love and the joy of Thy house; and let many prodigals in the far-off land bethink themselves of the abundant housekeeping of their Father's abode, and come back to be welcomed by the overflowing love of Thy Fatherly heart.

We beseech Thee to hear us, to grant us Thy blessing

in our worship, to forgive all our sins, and to accept us now, through Christ our Saviour.

XXV

O LORD, our God! we would draw near to Thee with lowly reverence, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us ever to cherish that fear of the Lord which hath no torment, and ever to be looking beyond the things seen and temporal to those unseen and eternal.

We thank Thee for all the light which Thou hast poured into the darkness beyond; and we thank Thee that that light does not illuminate all the darkness. For surely the things 'which eye hath not seen, . . . neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive,' and 'which Thou hast prepared for them that love Thee,' are too great and glorious for our eyes to behold, or our thoughts to comprehend here.

Help us then, we pray Thee, to live in the continual attitude of those whose best is yet to come, looking forward with hope, and ready for all which Thou mayest appoint for us on the path, if only the path lead us to the home.

We beseech Thee to bless each of us here in Thy presence, and to give us grace to lay a firm and believing hand on that great assurance that the risen Christ is our life, and that we, if absent from the body, shall be present with the Lord.

We pray Thee to draw near to each of us in all our various circumstances and necessities. We would especially commend to Thee all that are in any kind of sorrow or trouble; and those whom Thou hast taught to mourn the departure of dear ones. May they possess the abundant consolations of Thy grace.

And whatever empty places Thou dost make in hearts and homes do Thou Thyself fill. Whatever wounds Thou dost inflict do Thou Thyself bind up. And, O Lord! preserve us, we pray Thee, from rejecting Thy consolations and finding comfort rather in the vanities of earth than in the solid realities of Thy love and presence.

We pray Thee to be with us this morning in our worship, to direct our thoughts and words, to carry these words according to Thine own gracious promises into many hearts; and to grant that there they may bring forth fruit in so far as in them there is the seed of the Kingdom.

We beseech Thee to bless all Christian congregations who, like us, are now gathered together to seek Thy face, and to spread abroad throughout the world the knowledge and the fear of Thy holy Name, the faith and love of thy dear Son.

O Lord! accept us now; be with each of us as we wait in Thy presence, and let Thy word have free course among us and be glorified, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXVI

O Lord! Whose paths are all paths of peace, help us, we beseech Thee, though with faltering steps and slow, to tread in Christ's footsteps and take Him for our Leader and our Guide. In all lowly obedience and longing love may we follow Him, and, following Him here, as earth's weakness and temptations may permit, may we cherish a certain hope that in that better land we shall follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

We thank Thee that we can bring all our weakness

to Thyself in the assured confidence that Thy strength will be ours. Thou givest power to the faint, and 'to them that have no might Thou dost increase strength.' When we think of Thee as 'fainting not, neither weary,' may we ever feel that we have a portion in that great storehouse of undecaying and unexhausted power; and to us, and for us, may it be true that we shall be ready for all the great moments of life in which there are calls made on us for special effort, that we shall 'run and not be weary'; and that in all the common moments of life, when the same small duties have to be done over and over again, our patience may hold out, and we 'walk and not faint.'

To these ends, O Lord, help us, we beseech Thee, ever to 'mount up with wings as eagles,' and in aspiration towards Thyself, and set our affections and minds on things above. May we be raised above our own weaknesses, and possess that power on which time and decay have no force.

We beseech Thee to look upon us gathered here again, where we have often worshipped in the past. Thou hast been our help; 'leave us not, neither forsake us, O God of our Salvation.' And grant that the labours which we begin again to-day, and the relationships which we once more knit up again, may have Thy blessing; and that upon us, the people and the pastor, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is exceeding abundant, may come down through our faith and love.

We pray Thee to help us in the future that lies before us; known unto Thee are all its secrets. We would leave them in Thy hands, and ask Thee that upon us as a congregation there may be bestowed more abundantly, and received more faithfully, and used

more diligently, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Further our work; help us to build up ourselves on our most holy faith. Prosper the ministration of Thy truth among us, and stir up all Thy professing servants to live soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world; and so to adorn the teaching of Christ our Saviour in all things.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, in our prayer; mercifully accept and answer us, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

XXVII

O LORD, our God! Thou Who knowest all our hearts and needs, turn us, we beseech Thee, and cause Thy face to shine upon us, and we shall be saved. Let us have now the consciousness of Thy loving presence, and may our hearts go out towards Thee with ardour of desire, with perfect steadfastness of confidence, with submission and obedience, with hope unquenchable.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us, who profess and call ourselves possessors of that precious faith, to add to it all the excellences and graces which Thou dost desire, and art ready to bestow. May we make abundant provision for the Spirit, that so an abundant entrance may, at the last, be ministered unto us. Preserve us from all slothfulness, from all content with present attainments, from all tampering with the great end towards which we should aspire. May we forget the things that are behind, or only remember them to feed our thankfulness and to increase our self-distrust and dependence on Thee. May we reach forward ever to 'the things that are before,' and may our paths be as 'the shining light that shineth more and more' until the perpetual noontide.

We beseech thee to look upon us gathered here before Thee this morning. Give us Thy gracious help and blessing in our worship to-day; teaching us how to speak in Thy Name, and how to receive as Thy message even the words of a brother compassed with weakness as we are. May we all draw near to God. May we all be taught of Him, and possess the great peace which fills and calms the hearts of those who learn in His school.

Do Thou bless us in our worship; in all its parts. Do Thou accompany Thy message this morning with Thine own real grace. We commend one another to Thee in all our various circumstances, temptations, and duties, and pray Thee that we may so pass through, and use the things seen and temporal, that they may lead us to the firmer possession and the clearer vision of the things unseen and eternal.

Be with us in our daily work, of whatever kind it may be. Help us there to find opportunities for denying ourselves, and serving our fellows, and honouring God; and grant us Thy protecting shield against all the temptations that belong to our several callings, and all the weaknesses that lurk in our very selves.

We beseech Thee to bless, in like manner, all those who call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours, and to grant Thine abundant and ever-increasing blessing to all work that good men try to do in dependence upon Thee, for Thy glory and for our brethren's good. We pray Thee for the good estate of Thy whole Catholic Church; and beseech Thee that all who love the Lord Jesus Christ may rejoice in His Name, and may live for His praise. Bless our Sovereign, our country, and all persons in authority in this and other lands. Guide the thoughts of those who

lead the affairs of nations in this critical time. Break Thou the rod of the oppressor, and let the oppressed go free. Look upon all the miseries which are wrought by cruel men; and grant, we beseech Thee, that the light of Thy word may shine into the places which are the habitations of cruelty, that all the earth may know that truly there is a God that heareth the sighing of the needy and the groans of the oppressed.

We beseech Thee to hear us, to give us Thy blessing in our service of to-day, to forgive all our sins, and Thyself to speak in our waiting hearts, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XXVIII

O LORD! our gracious Father, Who art ever ready to bless and ever ready to hear our cry; we would come to Thee, though it be but with cold hearts and dim vision of Thee, yet we bless Thee that Thou dost manifest Thyself to unworthy seekers, and art always ready to over-answer, and make us thereby ashamed of our poor supplications and trembling faith. So we would draw near to Thee, and beseech Thee for grace to come. Do Thou breathe into our hearts the desires which Thou dost delight to see there, and to answer from Thy throne. Do Thou help us to turn away from everything that might disturb our communion with Thee, whether it be thoughts or feelings, whether it be daily work, or any other form of hindrances that beset us. We thank Thee that there is nothing that need keep us from Thee, except our own sinfulness; and we thank Thee that that sinfulness Thou art ready to put away from us, and to deliver us from. And we beseech Thee that this morning we may all,

in some measure, realise in our own experience at the moment the reality of Thy promises that Thou art nigh unto all them that call upon Thee; and may we be of those that call on Thee in truth, and so have a right to claim Thy faithful fulfilment of Thy mighty words.

We bring to Thee, O Lord! all our own weaknesses and all our sins and shortcomings, all our wanderings and rebellions, all our alienations of heart and undue self-regard. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst in Thy strength come to us and cast out all those foul things from our natures, and help us more and more, day by day, to build up ourselves on our most holy faith, and to keep ourselves in the love of God. Since Thou hast provided for us the strong City, with salvation for its walls and bulwarks, may we never elect rather to dwell in the palaces of strangers, which shall be brought low.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us each to make our own the things that are freely given to us of God. O Lord! we bring Thee our wants, and beseech Thee to help us to partake of that feast of fat things which Thou hast provided. We bring our sorrows to Thee, and beseech Thee to wipe away all tears from off all faces. We bring Thee our dim knowledge of Thee, our many errors and sins, and we pray Thee to take away from our faces the covering, and to remove from our hearts the veil, that with unveiled faces we may see Thee clearly mirrored and manifested in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Give us this morning, O Lord! Thy rich blessing. Truly we deserve it not, but yet we make bold to ask and expect it; for Thou dealest with us not according to our deserts but according to the counsels of Thine

own heart, and according to the might of Thy Son's Sacrifice. We pray Thee, then, to come to each of us, to pour Thy grace into our souls, to master all our weaknesses and sins, to deliver us from any misconceptions of Thee, of Thy character and purposes, and from any misunderstandings of Thy gracious will, as well as from all rebellion against it, and murmuring against Thy providences. And bring us, O Lord! we pray Thee, into that quiet place of communion with the Lord, the secret place of the Most High, where silent joys and secret strength are poured into waiting souls.

Give us, we pray Thee, Thy presence now, forgive all our many evils and imperfections, quicken us by Thy word and according to Thy word, and bless our worship in all its parts to all partaking of it this day; for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

XXIX

O Lord! our merciful Father! how rich the provision which Thou hast made for all the hungry and the starving! May we indeed never turn away from Thy merciful invitation.

We thank Thee that Thou hast bidden us to come. We pray that nothing here may keep us from yielding to Thy call, nor may we ever try to fill our mouths and nourish our being with the things—vain when separated from Thee—of this creatural and fleeting existence.

We beseech Thee to look upon us gathered here in Thy presence; and when Thy great message sounds in our ears—as we pray that it may sound—do Thou help us all to yield ourselves up to Thy call. O Lord! surely we have been spending our money for that which is not bread, and our labour for that which

satisfieth not; but we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst now help us to give ourselves up to Thee, and to trust ourselves altogether to Thy hand, and to find in Thee all that we need.

We pray for each of us, in all the various relations and duties of our daily lives; and we beseech Thee that our common calling may be indeed, for each of us, that wherein we are called of God; and wherein, therefore, we abide for His service. Do Thou direct us in all our ways. May nothing seem to us to be too small to have the greatest principles of Thy word, and the greatest powers of Thy love, brought to bear upon it. May nothing be too great and formidable to be encountered, overcome, or done in Thy service, and by Thy grace. Give us, we pray Thee, the right understanding of all Thy providences; may we neither despise the chastenings of the Lord, nor faint when we are rebuked of Him. May we never commit the error of thinking either too much or too little of our sorrows, but may they all lead us to Thyself.

We beseech Thee to bless each in Thy presence. Go with us, day by day, through the changing circumstances of life, and grant that all the wideness of that ocean may bear us onwards to the solid earth beyond. We pray Thee to bless our worship this morning, to be with us in this service, forgiving all the imperfections and sins which we have brought with us. Hear, and touch hearts and lips with Thine own fiery finger, that they may be cleansed, that utterance may be given to us, and that the hearing ear, as well as the understanding heart, may be ours.

We commend to Thy care all our brethren of all communions and names, and pray that the flock of Jesus Christ may be gathered more closely round the

Shepherd, and may tread more docilely and nearly in His footsteps. Take us now, O Lord, into Thy gracious care, forgive our many sins, accept and bless us, as we worship before Thee, and answer us now; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XXX

O LORD! truly Thy mercy endureth for ever, and great is Thy faithfulness. Thou hast made great lights, for Thy mercy endureth for ever; Thou hast had pity on us in our lowest estate, for Thy mercy endureth for ever; Thou hast sent redemption to Thy people, and given us Thy Son for our Saviour, for Thy mercy endureth for ever.

And now we come to Thee, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst still be gracious to us notwithstanding all our shortcomings and manifold transgressions, and wouldst magnify the greatness of Thy patience, and the eternity of Thy loving-kindness in that Thou dost still receive us when we come back to Thee from our wanderings, and claim our portion in the Father's house.

Look upon us and be gracious to us in this hour of worship. Touch all our hearts and draw them all to Thyself. Grant that our service this evening, though in so far as we are concerned it is poor and unworthy, may be accepted by Thee, seeing that we draw near and offer our petitions, our confessions, and ourselves in the Name and trusting to the might of Jesus Christ our sole Saviour and Sovereign.

XXXI

O LORD! our gracious Father, Who art ever ready to hear, and more than ready to give an answer, we would beseech Thee that we may, in some degree, be made ready to receive and to desire Thy great gifts and Thyself. Surely Thou art Love. Surely Love delights to impart. Surely Love is not soon angry nor easily provoked. And therefore it is in our hearts, O Lord, to come to Thee, the Fountain of all love, just because we have so often transgressed against Thee, forgotten Thee, and been cold of heart towards Thee. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst, in Thy great mercy, draw near to us now, and help us to draw near to Thee. When we think of ourselves we are abashed and silenced. When we think of Thee we are comforted, and can speak. Our iniquities are more than the hairs of our head; our hearts fail us, and we dare not look up if we did not know that Thy mercies pass number, and are more and mightier than our sins. So, Lord! we draw near to Thee, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless each of us here in Thy presence this evening with the earnest desire to receive from Thy hand the fulness of gifts which Thou dost earnestly desire to bestow. Oh that there may be none of us starving in the midst of the plenty of our Father's house! Oh that there may be none of us putting away from us blindly and foolishly the all-sufficient gifts which Thou art offering to us heedless ones! Help us to withdraw our affections from all things beneath Thyself, and to love all other creatures in Thee the Creator, and to see all other good as having its Fountain and Source in Thy-

self. So preserve us, we pray Thee, from the ills and follies of life; and help us to secure for our own true treasures and abiding substance which come to us, not from life, but through it from Thyself.

Give to us, O Lord! in all parts of this service Thy gracious help. Especially, Lord, teach us how to speak some words in Thy Name which may be weighty with the power of Thy truth, and tender with the infinitude of Thy love. May the message of Thy mercy and the gracious call of Thy gospel not be altogether marred by the human vehicle through which it passes; but may there be this evening, even in our poor words, some savour of that Divine love which beseeches us to be reconciled to God. Preserve us from error, and preserve us from all wrong ways of listening to, and accepting, Thy message. May we not receive it slightly. May we not let the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, enter in and choke the word. May we not permit it to be carried away from our hearts, where it lies on the surface, as soon as it is sown, but may we all receive it into honest and good hearts, where it shall bring forth fruit.

O Lord! Thou knowest each of us, in all the variety of our characters and wants. And we pray Thee that Thou wouldst help us each, in our daily lives, to have continual regard to Thy will, and continual confidence in Thy presence and help. May we indeed rejoice in the Lord always; and whatsoever may be the complexion of our present circumstances, whether they be bright or dark, at ease or troubled; whether we be surrounded by friends or walking a solitary path, whether compassed by temptations or helped by many things that further our progress in righteousness, grant

that we all may be looking unto Thyself as our sole support, and unto Thy power as our true strength. Forgive all our iniquities; be with any of us that are in trouble or sorrow. Look upon the miseries and the sins, the sighing and the tears, the oppression of this world, and manifest Thyself as the Judge of all the earth. Break the rod of the oppressor, and let the victims go free. Shed abroad Thy grace upon our hearts, as we wait before Thee. Give even to the unworthy ministration of Thy truth this night, seals in the shape of souls for the hire of the minister.

Hear us, O Lord! we beseech Thee; grant us Thy blessing now; with the forgiveness of our sins; and more than an answer to the imperfection, the poverty, and the unbelief of our petitions; through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

XXXII

O Lord, our God! we would bring our humble, loyal praises to join in that great song from every creature of blessing and honour and glory and power to the Lamb that was slain. And we thank Thee that we can think of our Brother as King of Kings and Lord of Lords; and can rest secure in the assurance that all power is given in Heaven and on earth unto the hands that were nailed to the Cross. We thank Thee that His sceptre is still the reed, and that meekness and gentleness rule in His Kingdom. We thank Thee for all the sweet constraint of love by which willing hearts are bound to do everything that that Lord pleases. We beseech Thee that we may know more and more of the blessedness of glad surrender, and the peace that

comes from being and doing what and only what Jesus Christ wills.

O Lord! we would render up our thankful hearts. We are not our own; may we more and more feel that we have been bought with a price, and belong not to ourselves but to Jesus Christ. May that joyous conviction that He belongs to us too, flow through all our lives, and change everything for us; making 'the crooked straight, and the rough places plain,' and helping us in every duty, so that all the burdens which Thou dost lay upon us may be borne up.

We come to Thee, O Lord! this morning, with humble thanksgivings for all Thy great mercies to us. Surely Thou art our light and our salvation; and we beseech Thee that, living in Thy light, we may fear none beside. Be Thou near us, to equip us for all duty and circumstances, to guide us to victory in every conflict, and to strengthen our hearts that we may be of good courage. We would wait before Thee in submission of will, and in direction of thought and desire towards Thee, and in patient confidence that Thou wilt, in the right time and way, manifest Thyself to us, wilt fulfil the desires of them that fear Thee, and wilt save them. Do Thou keep us, we pray Thee, from self-will, from impatience, from prescribing paths to Thee, from murmuring at the paths which Thou dost prescribe to us. May we not make haste because, believing, we are at peace. May we be ready for all Thy commands, for all Thy manifest will, howsoever it is revealed to us; and may Thy word, however spoken, hid in our hearts make us strong for all duty, and for every scene of life.

Do Thou give us Thy blessing, without which our meeting is nothing, and our words as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. Draw near to us, we pray Thee,

and may we each and all draw near to Thee, and find that it is not a vain thing to spread our hands before Thee. Let the peace which passes all understanding come into all our hearts and minds, however we may have been torn asunder by distractions and gnawing cares and anxieties and duties and divers fascinations of this passing world. May we this morning be able, with all our hearts and souls and strength and might, to come into the secret place of the Most High, and to feel that Thou hidest us in Thy tabernacle from the strife of tongues, and dost set our feet upon a rock.

We pray for Thy blessing; for Thy presence; for Thy word sounding in our hearts, and welcome there. And we beseech Thee to give us all which Thou knowest we need, to make this service full of blessing, and capable of yielding its highest good to each of us. O Lord, hear us; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, pardon and accept, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXXIII

O Lord God! we would bring our selfish desires to Thee, and pray Thee to quicken us by the life-giving Spirit dwelling in our hearts, that we may, in all things joined to Thyself, draw from Thee our true life, and have the victory over the living death of sin and worldliness. We beseech Thee to help us by Thy grace, to manifest the secret of our inward life by our outward walk. May we adorn the teaching, and verify our discipleship, by our deeds. May we bear the fruit of the Spirit, and grow in godliness and bring forth fruit unto life everlasting. O Lord! graft us into the true Vine that, partaking of its fulness, we may be no longer

barren nor bring forth evil fruit, but the tree being made good by the inflowing of Christ's life into ours, may its fruit be good unto holiness and the end everlasting life. Help us all, we pray Thee, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ Jesus made us free; and may no yoke of bondage cast its snares about our feet and entangle us in our goings.

We draw near to Thee this morning with a prayer for one another in all the variety of our wants and circumstances, and pray Thee that Thou wouldst help each of us as the matter of the day shall be. Give us our daily bread and equipment, and help us at all times to recognise our dependence on Thee, and be conscious of Thy sufficiency flowing into us. Do Thou guide us in all practical matters. We thank Thee that the wisdom from above is profitable to direct; and that though it be as a star in the heavens, it can rest over the humble house, and lead men's feet along the road.

We pray that Thou wouldst help us to set Thee before us in all our duties, and not to live only by lower motives or for lower ends, but in all things to know the constraint of the love of Christ, and in the smallest duties to seek to be ruled by the greatest motives. We beseech Thee that if any of us are in any kind of trouble, Thou wouldst draw near, as Thou art so willing to do, to all wounded and sad hearts, and wouldst minister consolations which Thou dost never withhold from those that are in any way afflicted in mind, body, or estate. Be with any of us who may be solitary, and therefore sad, with any who may have lost loved companionship, and in whose hearts and lives there may be gaps that nothing earthly can ever fill. We pray that Thou wouldst reveal Thyself to all such, and show them that Thou Thyself dost desire to

fill the places which Thy loving providence has emptied. O Lord! look upon us in our worship, direct our words and thoughts, and carry the truth that may be in them to all our hearts and minds, that this morning's service may be indeed as a message from God to every one of us. And we beseech Thee to bless all faithful preaching of Thy truth this day, in whatever Communion of Thy saints Thy servants may live. May they not labour in vain, but send Thy Spirit with Thy word, and make it more fruitful in more hearts.

We pray for our country, for our Sovereign, for our rulers, for all who teach and exercise influence in this and other lands; that all complications and calamities may be overruled by Thee. We believe that Thou dost still govern the world, and though we understand not all the perplexities of Thy providence, blessed be Thy Name! we know that all comes from a loving Heart, and that all tends to a great end. We pray that Thy servants may possess their souls in patience in the midst of contradiction and reproach and oppression, and that all Thy people, according to the measure of their power, may enlist themselves on the side of that Kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy for the whole world.

Help us in our worship now, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

XXXIV

With thankful hearts, O Lord! we would again draw near to Thee, and bless Thee that we, too, can sing of mercy and of judgment; and that Thy judgments are mercies and all Thy ways faithfulness and truth. We thank Thee for all the way by which the Lord

our God hath led us, and we acknowledge that it has only been when we have sought to make ways for ourselves that Thou hast hedged up our paths with thorns, and kept us from running in self-chosen and self-pleasing ways. We thank Thee for all Thy paths which are faithful and true. Help us, with diligent feet and cheerful hearts, to run with patient perseverance the race that is set before us. Thou shalt choose our inheritance for us; give us grace to subdue our wills to Thine, and to spread all our purposes and aims and wishes before Thee, and to take Thy counsel about everything. May we not resist Thy manifest will; may we not seek to force or anticipate it. May we ever let the Ark go before us that we may know the way by which we ought to go; for every new day brings its new duties, even though they be but the repetition of the old ones. It is always true that we have not travelled this way heretofore; and we thank Thee that we have with us One Who will not let us go astray if we will keep near to Him. We bless Thee for the many past generations that have found that God's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all the paths of His Incarnate Wisdom are paths of peace. So help us, we beseech Thee, to leave ourselves always in Thy hands, and to be more desirous to know what the Lord would have us to do than to take counsel of one another, or of our own inclinations.

We come to Thee with thankfulness for Thy great and manifold mercies to us; surely Thy judgments are a great deep. Thy loving-kindness is patent and plain; and since Thou preservest man and beast, and by many infallible tokens in our daily lives dost teach us Thy loving purposes, we will trust Thee for all things, and ask for grace to say Thou doest all things

well. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us this morning, with no reservation of heart, to bring these our submissive acknowledgments for all Thy dealings with us, and do Thou help us with equal completeness to lean ourselves upon Thee for all the unknown future, and evermore to walk in that peace which comes to them who are careful with anxious care for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make their requests known unto God. Renew our communion with the great truths and thoughts of Thy revelation; help us, we beseech Thee, in our service of to-day, guiding each of us, and giving to him who speaks, and to them that hear, the grace that they respectively need.

We thank Thee for Thy loving-kindness in the past; we bless Thee still more for that great and unchanging mercy of which this day speaks to us all. We thank Thee for the risen Saviour, for the loving Christ, for the reigning King; for our Intercessor in Thy presence who has gone in to prepare a place for us, and comes to us through all the days with the gifts of His grace and Spirit, and will come at last to take us to Himself. May these great hopes live ever in our minds and hearts, and cast light upon all the dark places through which we have passed, or may have to pass. Hear us, O Lord! give us Thy blessing; lift our hearts and spirits now! bring us into, and keep us in the fellowship with Thee, which is righteousness and peace and joy. All we ask is for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXXV

O Lord! our gracious Father, shed upon all of us, we beseech Thee, the helpful influences of Thy gracious

Spirit, that we may indeed be in subjection to the Father of our spirits, and thereby live the true and the only life. We beseech Thee to draw us nearer to Thyself by the experience of Thy manifold mercies and wise gifts to us. Truly Thou dost draw us with the cords of love, and with the bands of a man. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst further help us that we may yield to the drawings, and evermore submit ourselves, in our thoughts and wishes, in our inclinations and aims, to Thy merciful guidance. Help us daily to strive after that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. And do Thou bestow upon us that great gift, the promise of the Father, which Thou hast given to the world in Jesus Christ, and which we believe is waiting for us. May we know what it is to have our spirits filled with Thy Spirit, and to be made thereby free from the law of sin and death which we carry about within us.

Grant us, O Lord! that whatsoever diversities of necessity and condition may be represented here among us, we may all find in the message of Thy grace, and the participation in Thy great love, that which we severally require. Thou knowest all our wants and ways. Thou seest us as we are, whilst we have but a partial knowledge of ourselves and of our interests. We often think we need things which would do us harm, and when we do pray to Thee, we often ask for serpents instead of fishes, and scorpions instead of eggs. So we would refer all our desires to Thee, O Lord! and pray that Thou wouldst deliver us from foolish and ruinous wishes, and that Thou wouldst shatter our prayers when we ask for things that would harm us, and wouldst do with us according to Thy better wisdom. And, O! bring our hearts into such loving

fellowship with Thee that we shall never stand amazed or aghast at anything which Thou dost will for us. We would leave ourselves in Thy hands, and pray for grace earnestly to labour with Thee at Thy great purposes which Thou hast in view in all that Thou doest with us, even that we may be partakers of Thy holiness.

We beseech Thee to go with each of us, in all the variety of our wants and duties and tasks. O Lord! be near any of us who are in sorrow or trouble; lift up the hands that hang down, strengthen the feeble knees. Teach us to run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus. Comfort with Thine own consolations all hearts that need Thy gentle ministrations. We pray that Thou wouldst enlighten us as to all Thy will, in so far as it concerns our belief and practice. Prosper us according to Thy wisdom in what we set our hands to; and grant that, above all, the pleasure of the Lord may prosper in our hands, and that our work may be Thy work, and Thine ours.

We beseech Thee to bless all who, in like manner with us, are to-day drawing near to Thee for solace and succour. We ask that Thy mercy may rest upon all the worship of Thy people, and that large blessings may come in answer thereto, to every seeking and to every waiting heart. Do Thou, O Lord, give Thy servants more grace to lay more upon their hearts their obligations to Thee, to their Lord and to the world, and make Thy people more fit and more worthy to be Thy witnesses. May they so live that many shall be drawn by their lives, as well as by their words, to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and that there may be added to Thy Church daily such as are being saved.

Hear us, O Lord, in our supplications; be near us as

we wait before Thee. Give us Thy word to speak, and touch our lips with the live coal from the altar, that their iniquity may be taken away and their sin purged; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour we ask it all.

XXXVI

O Lord! ever great and ever gracious, we thank Thee that Thine eternal power is all guided by almighty love and wisdom; and we would come to Thee now claiming the child's share in all Thy sweetness and majesty. We bless Thee that our hopes may indeed rise above all the fleeting things, fair and good as these are, with which Thou hast adorned Thy creation. We thank Thee that we can pass through all these, the handmaidens and mirrors of Thy goodness, and can come into Thy presence and cling to Thee, and feel that we have Thee, the Lord, as the portion of our inheritance and of our cup. May each of us truly say so, and live accordingly; and then the lines will be fallen to us in pleasant places, and we shall have a goodly heritage.

We thank Thee that Thou dost yield Thyself to us. May we yield ourselves to Thee in lowly submission, in constant realisation of Thy presence, in joyful aspiration after Thee, in perfect trust in Thee. May our wills be bowed to Thine, our hearts united to Thy great heart, and in Thy light may we see light; and, being taught of God, have wisdom according to our needs, and the great peace of Thy children.

O Lord! we need Thy help always; we never need it more than when we try to draw near to Thee. We bless Thee that Thy right hand upholdeth all those

who press hard after Thee; teach us how to pray. Be with us in all our service, grant to each of us our portion in the provisions of Thy house, and fill Thy poor with bread. Cleanse our hearts, we beseech Thee, from all their follies and vanities. May the surpassing sweetness of the good and true drive from us all attraction towards the evil and the false. May we live more as becometh the Gospel. May our lives be sermons, our characters reflections of Thyself. May we ever be tending towards, and aspiring, and in the measure possible for earth, attaining to the perfection of our perfect Father in the Heavens.

O Lord! Thou knowest all our diverse need. We bless Thee that we can believe that we have each of us our own defined and separate place in Thy heart. And we pray that the counsels of Thy wisdom may more and more shape our lives, and be permitted by us to mould ourselves, and that we may increasingly receive into our hearts the inward blessings which are greater than all the outward mercies, great as these are, of Thy providence. Hear us, O Lord, in our prayer, we beseech Thee, attend to the voice of our supplication, and be ever gracious to us when Thou hearest our cry. We pray Thee to accept and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXXVII

O Lord, our Father! Who hast given to us such great and wondrous gifts, all summed up in that mighty word 'Thy grace,' and dost bow Thyself to beseech us to put away our enmity and alienation, and yield ourselves to Thee; grant that none of us here this evening

may turn deaf ears or hardened hearts to the manifestation of Thy love, and the call of Thy mercy sounding in our ears all our days, through the gentleness and the Cross of Jesus Christ our Lord. May all who profess to open their lips as Thy ministers and messengers have their hearts softened with the pity and compassion that Christ exercised. And may their hearts have in them something of the lowliness and something of the drawing power which were in His Who spake as never man spake, and into Whose lips grace was poured. Oh! that all His servants and messengers this evening may share in that great gift, and may be able, by Thy merciful help, to forget themselves, and remember their message, and to exalt Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, and commend Him to many hearts. We beseech Thee to strengthen us for what remains of this hour of worship. Give some message from Thyself that may suit all our conditions and characters. Strengthen us to hear as well as to speak Thy holy word; and may it be as good seed fallen into good soil, neither to be swept away by the fowls of the air, nor prematurely to grow on the surface of our minds, nor to be choked by the carefulness of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, or the lusts of other things entering in, but to bring forth fruit unto Thy honour and Thy glory at the appearing of our Lord and Saviour. We beseech Thee to hear us, to give Thy blessing to all who are gathered in like manner this evening, and to let the glory and the gentleness of Christ our Saviour sound upon many lips, and enter into many hearts. Do thou accept us as we are gathered before Thee now, be with us according to all our various necessities, go with us in all our many professions and occupations as with

those whom Christ has redeemed, and may our lips rightfully witness, and transparently reveal, whose we are, and whom we serve. Grant us Thy blessing; accept and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XXXVIII

THOU callest us, O Lord! by many mercies to seek Thy face. 'Thy face, Lord! will we seek.' Hide not Thy face far from us, but shine into our hearts a better and a brighter Sun, and make us glad by the light of Thy presence. We bless Thee that there is never anything but gladness for those that love Thee, in Thy nearness and in all Thy work upon us. And this morning, however some of us may be compassed about by infirmity, and weighed upon by sore distress, we would yet rejoice in the Lord, and be glad at the remembrance of His holiness. Lift up our hearts, we beseech Thee, O Father! in the exercise of lowly and fixed faith in Thyself, and strengthen us that whatever may be our present condition we may draw near to Thee now, with glad hearts, and find rest and peace in the thought of Thyself and Thy love to us, and our hold upon Thee. We bless Thee for all Thy mercies dealt out to us day by day and moment by moment. Give us eyes to read more plainly, and hearts to feel more fully Thine own continual and wise mercies to us.

But this morning we would specially bring to Thee our praise for that great work, crowned and sealed as on this day, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to the inheritance that is incorruptible, and the inheritance which His possession makes ours too. We would triumph in that Saviour. We bless Thee for

the manifest demonstrations of the life triumphant over, and unmarred by death. We thank Thee that He has gone to prepare a place for us. We lift up our hearts from this low earth and would desire to set them on the things that are above where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. In Him may we each be raised from the dead, and reckon that we, too, are dead to sin, and alive to God; in Whom may we, while compassed about with the shows of Time, sit at the Father's right hand in the heavenly places, and in Whom may we find the fulness of immortal life which flows over into our death. O Lord! bless us now, strengthen us to draw near to Thee, in full assurance of faith, having all our iniquities cleansed and ourselves bathed in the pure water of Thy divine Spirit. And may we, worshipping in Thy presence this day, realise more clearly and fully than we often do amidst the distractions of passing duties, Thine own gracious and sweet presence, and rest a firmer faith upon Him that is mighty; and derive fuller life and more rejoicing hope, as well as completer holiness and purer consecration, from the risen Saviour.

Look upon us, O Lord! Receive our thanks this day; deepen our gratitude whilst we express it, and draw us nearer to Thyself, that this morning our worship may be very real and very blessed to each one of us according to our several needs. We ask all in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XXXIX

O Lord, our gracious Father! help us, we beseech Thee, that we may build rock upon Rock; and establish our lives by obedience to Jesus Christ. We thank Thee

for the sure foundation laid in Zion, the tried Corner-stone, on which whosoever buildeth shall not need to make haste, whatsoever storms may blow and beat. We beseech Thee that our poor shifting lives may indeed be based upon the one Foundation. May we never rely upon, and limit our thoughts or our work to, the transiencies of Time, the sand which is blown about by every wind, but may we lay hold on the Eternal, and be of those happy ones who, doing the will of God, abide for ever when the world passeth away, and the fashion thereof. To this end, O Lord! bless all our gatherings together here as a Christian congregation; to this end may all our ministrations be directed. Do thou bless the words spoken here from time to time; help all Thy servants to live by the living word, and not only to trust in Jesus Christ for their salvation, but to take Him for their Pattern, Commander and King. We pray that Thou wouldst prosper our meetings this day, and all efforts put forth by any of us in connection with this, or any other part of Thy Kingdom, for the spread of the Name, and the glory of the salvation of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Grant, we beseech Thee, to each of us, according to our diverse necessities, strength requisite for our special circumstances, the correction needed by our individual weaknesses, the power required for our several duties. We beseech Thee to comfort and succour and uphold, and in Thine own good time grant deliverance to, Thy troubled servants. We beseech Thee that in all our hearts there may abide, settled and for ever, the peace of God which passeth understanding, and in the strength thereof may we be able to encounter whatsoever afflictions Thy providence lays upon us as tokens of a Father's love; and to

do all duties which Thy providence imposes upon us.

We beseech Thee to bless all Christian communities this day, to pour out upon the whole Church of the living God that gracious Spirit whereby it shall become indeed a power in the earth, drawing men into the sacred shelter of Thy grace.

We pray for our Sovereign, our country; for all rulers and guides of action and of opinion in this land of ours; for all legislators, judges, authors, teachers, preachers, and all who influence their fellows. We beseech Thee that the result of all may be increasingly to gather men into the peaceful Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

O Lord! Lift up our hearts to Thyself; give us Thy blessing as we wait in Thy presence; speak in the mind and heart of him that speaks. Let the word of the Lord run and be glorified among us this day; we ask all through Christ our Saviour's sake.

XL

We thank Thee, O God! that still Thou dost speak with us as a man speaketh with his friend. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to respond to Thy loving heart; that we may truly be called the friends of God. We thank Thee for Thy changeless love, for Thy mighty and all-sufficient presence. We thank Thee that we may have Thee for our Companion, Counsellor, Guide; for our hearts' delight and treasure in all our circumstances. We pray Thee to strengthen us that we may truly set our minds and affections on Thyself, and so use all the blessings and discharge all the duties and bear all the sorrows of this earthly life

as that they may bring us and keep us nearer to Thyself. We see Thee sometimes from afar and dimly long for Thy nearer presence. We follow our Master with faltering steps and slowly; with many a wandering from the path, and many a starting aside of heart and mind. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us in the days to come, be they more or fewer, to make straight paths for our feet, and to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Oh! do Thou forgive all our wanderings; do Thou strengthen us that in time to come we may live soberly, righteously, godly, and may less interrupt the flow of Thy friendship and love to us by our own departures from Thee. Surely it is true that none of them that trust in Thee shall be desolate. May we fulfil the condition, and do Thou fulfil the promise.

Do Thou teach us the fear of the Lord. May we be of those righteous ones on whom Thine eye ever rests. May we have the contrite hearts to which Thou art near; and may we practise the holy living which draws Thee to our sides. We beseech Thee to bestow upon us all needful good. We would not seek to possess that, by our own violence and effort, from created things, but quietly to trust in Thee believing that they who wait upon the Lord shall not want any good. We thank Thee for all Thy past mercies to us; we too have to say, and we might have had it oftener to say if we had been more trustful and devout, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles.' Help us to cleave closely unto Thyself in love and obedience, in holy living and righteous desire and thoughts, and strengthen us day by day to run with cheerful patience the race that is set before us. Cleanse our hearts from all evil. De-

liver us from our own waywardness and folly; set clearer and clearer before us Thy purposes concerning us. May we fall in with these, of whatsoever sort they are, and find that in submission and confidence there is great reward. Grant us now some message and some illumination from Thy sanctuary, and the inflow into our weakness of Thy strength, and into our troubled hearts of Thy peace. Bless and accept us in our morning's worship. Grant to each of us more and more of the light of Thy countenance. Grant us Thy gracious presence and help, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

XLI

O Lord, our merciful God, may our eyes ever see that great vision. May we ever feel that sustaining and guiding hand laid upon us, and may the peaceful confidence that He is the First and the Last, our Friend and Brother, stay our hearts at all times. We thank Thee for Him Who liveth and became dead, and though in the flesh He died lives for evermore, and holds the keys of every chamber in the Father's house. And we beseech Thee that our strength may be drawn from that Lord, and that our eyes piercing through the things that seem, may behold the things which are, though they are hid by a veil of flesh from our mortal sight. We thank Thee that they are not hid from Thee, nor from them who cleave to Thee, and we pray that the things unseen may, as they ought to be, be more real, more near, more mighty with us, than the things that are seen and temporal.

O Lord! look upon us, we pray Thee, in Thy presence now. Thou knowest each of us, with all

our weakness and wants. Be Thou near to each of us, that our weakness may become strength and our wants be supplied. Bless us, we pray Thee, with the desires which Thou dost always satisfy. May we hunger and thirst with that blessed thirst after righteousness which shall be filled; and amidst all the disappointments, and half-fulfilled and wholly disappointed efforts and desires of this mortal life, may we seek where we shall always find, and knock at that door which ever flies open to the hand of faith.

We pray Thee to bless us in our daily life and duties, to guide us by Thy counsel, to help us more and more to stay ourselves on the Lord, and on His grace. We ask Thee that we may have quiet and brave hearts, ready for all Thy will, and swift to know and to do our duty. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst implant in us, and help us to work out in our lives more and more of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. We pray for Thy guidance in all perplexities, for Thy companionship at all times, for peace and rest and joy, drawn from no questionable and transient sources, but from the knitting of our spirits and the submission of our wills to Thyself. With such blessings bless us all; and if any of us have any special needs—as who of us has not?—do Thou give to each of us the portion that is necessary for us in due season. Accept us as we come to Thee with our thanksgivings, poor as these are, measured against Thy measureless mercies, and strengthen us day by day to understand more and more of the loving-kindness of the Lord, because we more patiently and faithfully and lovingly observe the dealings of His hand.

We beseech Thee to hear and answer us, in Thy great love and pity, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

XLII

Almighty God, we Thine unworthy creatures would bring our poor voices to join in that universal song of praise and honour and glory and power unto Him that loved us, and loosed us from our sins by His own blood, and lives to make us sharers in His Kingdom. We pray that all gathered here this evening may indeed, in their own hearts, make Jesus Christ Lord of all. May we yield ourselves, in glad and graceful surrender, to Him Who has given Himself for, and to, each of us.

O Lord! to this end bless our gathering together this evening, and give to the speaker and to the hearers ears and hearts to hear and to receive the glad word of Thy love to man in Jesus Christ our Lord. Thou knowest each of us in our deepest hearts. We believe that Thou lovest us better than we love ourselves. May we never doubt that; never go against it; may we make Thy love our joy and peace. May we yield ourselves to Thee, moved and drawn by the mercies of God as loving sacrifices.

Hear us in our prayer; grant us Thy help in our hour of worship; strengthen and fit each of us for it, and for all Thy will; and accept us now in Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

XLIII

Again, O Lord! we would lift up our hearts to Thee, for surely Thou art always ready to hear us, and our needs are ever fresh. May our petitions and desires be as frequent as they; and even when there are no words to express it may our dependence be upon Thee, and our eyes be towards Thee, in the midst of all the duties

of daily life, and of the varying circumstances of it. We thank Thee that we can thus come to Thee, for thus Thou dost count the unspoken needs of Thy servants as a prayer and hearest them as Thou dost, as the young ravens when they cry. Surely Thou dost hear yet more gladly and answer yet more royally the spoken words of desire, of anticipation, and of thanksgiving, which grateful hearts would bring to Thee. Breathe, then, over us all this evening, however diverse may be our circumstances, the one springing and longing desire to possess Thee, that Thou dwelling in our hearts, our hearts may be stayed and kept in perfect peace. May we be of those who dwell in the strong city which God has appointed, and of which salvation is ever the wall and bulwark.

We thank Thee, O Lord! that in the midst of all our weakness and darkness we may have light shining into our lives, and the strength of God breathed into our spirits. And we pray that we may never turn our eyes away from that light, nor shut our hearts against that love and grace. Thou knowest each of us here before Thee, and how to some of us words of very lowly confession and acknowledgment of long-continued blessings from, and forgetfulness of, Thee, would be fitting. We beseech Thee that if there are any of us of whom it is true that the God in Whose hand our breath is, and Whose are all our ways we have not glorified, Thou wouldst graciously bless our meeting together, and by any words that may be spoken wouldst lead such wandering souls back to the centre-point of blessedness, the home of their hearts in God Himself. We pray that if there are any of us that may be groping in darkness, and waiting half despairingly for light to shine upon our paths, Thou wouldst in Thine own time

scatter the darkness, and send forth Thy light and Thy truth; guiding us to Thy holy hill where we can rest. We pray that if there are any of us compassed about by some strong and o'ermastering temptation, Thou wouldst establish our faltering footsteps, and keep us from slipping and falling. Set our feet upon the Rock and make sure our goings. Give us the victory over ourselves, and all the temptations that appeal to our worst selves. Give us the strength of that life which in Thy Son conquered the temptations in the wilderness and at the Cross, and is now offered unto all who seek for it, knowing their own weakness. And whatever may be our condition, Lord! do Thou bless the provisions of Thy house; and though what we have to bring by our own strength may be but as the five loaves and the two little fishes amongst thousands, Thou canst multiply it and give it power to nourish even a multitude. Let Thy presence be felt. Remember us all this evening, breathe Thy good Spirit over us, help us to speak and to listen, to accept and to obey the Lord and Lover of our souls.

Do Thou graciously hear us when we cry for others than ourselves. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst comfort all that mourn, enlighten them that sit in darkness, send abroad Thy gracious message throughout the world. Restrain the violence of cruel and wicked men. Destroy the power of evil, and bring the tribes of earth to sit in peace, and to labour in love for their Redeemer-King.

We pray Thee to hear us now, to grant us Thy blessing, to forgive all our sins, and to make us all participant in the holy grace which Thou dost destine for us all, through faith in Christ Jesus, in Whose Name we present our petitions and ourselves.

XLIV

We would come to Thee, O Lord, our God, in the might of that Name which is above every name, and beseech Thee to help us to recognise in Him our Saviour, the Angel of Thy face, in Whom is Thy Name.

We thank Thee for the strong tower into which, running, we may be safe, even the Name of the Lord our God. We pray that all Thy gracious revelation of Thyself, made to us at sundry times and in divers manners, and gathered together for us, and for all men, in Jesus Christ our Saviour, may be for us the foundation of our hope, the law of our whole lives. We come to Thee with our weakness, and believe Thou canst make us strong. We come with our waywardness and our sinfulness, and ask Thee to bind us to Thyself, in close and durable bonds, and to deliver us from all unrighteousness. We come with our empty hearts, and pray Thee to give to us Thyself, to be their Anchor and their Hope, their Rest and their Joy.

We beseech Thee that for all varying circumstances Thine unchanging presence may be our steadfastness and strength, and for every difficulty, trial, or perplexity, we may find in Thee that which the moment requires. We thank Thee for all past blessings. We would not except from our thankfulness the sorrows which Thou hast sent us, and the pains which Thou hast laid upon us. In all changing circumstances may we have a firm hold upon Thyself which shall make us lords of all things, and shall help us to use for the highest good all which Thou dost send.

We bless Thee for Thy many daily benefits. Surely Thou dost follow us step by step with punctual providences, and with patient pardons. We beseech Thee

that we may learn rightly to understand the meaning of all that befalls us, and may not be content with gathering from it the lower lessons of worldly wisdom and prudence, but may be led by all our changes to lay firm hold of that unchanging love which Thou dost offer and we need.

Look upon us, O Lord! as we are gathered here before Thee this morning. Grant to each of us that gracious help which our several circumstances and many conditions may require. Stir Thou us up that we may lay hold upon Thy Name; let some quickening impulse from Thine own presence come to our too slothful hearts. Bind us more closely, more lovingly, with fuller experience of the blessedness of being Thine, unto Thyself. May our worship this day be full of earnest reality, and the words that we may be taught of Thee to speak be Thy words, and go, with as little as may be of human imperfection adhering to them, to all our hearts as indeed and in truth God's word and will concerning us. We thank Thee that Thou dost permit us so to gather together. We pray that we may not be meeting in our own strength, nor blind to Thy Presence, but that we may realise the promise that Jesus Christ will be in the midst of us, having fulfilled the condition that we are assembled in His Name. Forgive all our many wickednesses and transgressions for the Lord Christ's sake.

XLV

O Lord! our Almighty and most gracious Father, help us all to lay upon our hearts these solemn exhortations and commandments. May we live like the sons of God, bearing the family likeness, and showing that we are Thine, because we are as Thou art. Help us

not only to be without spot but without rebuke; and may our lives be such that men may see in us whose we are and whom we serve.

Thou hast laid upon Thy children the mighty prerogative and privilege of shining here as lights in the world. Oh! that we may discharge our functions, and perform all the duties which Thou dost lay upon us. Forgive our imperfections, forgive the feebleness and the flickering of the light that comes from us. Help us to draw nearer to Thyself, and fill our emptiness from Thee that our lives may be more manifestly and continuously influenced by, and mirrored and reflecting, Thine own glory. Bless each of us in our various duties and circumstances. Go with us in all our occupations and relationships; whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, may we do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus. May our days be conspicuously filled by, and devoted to, and joyful with Him. If any of us have come to Thy house this morning with sad thoughts or burdened hearts, do Thou speak peace to such, we beseech Thee; and strengthen us to look beyond the things that are seen, to the things that are unseen and eternal. We pray that all our changing circumstances may contribute to the one end of our firmer and more joyful possession of Thy unchanging self. We ask Thee that Thou wouldst guide any of us who may be in difficulty or perplexity, and wouldst show us the path for our feet, and the secret anchorage of our thoughts. O Lord! suffer not any of us to abide in ignorance or error. Lead us into Thy paths, and send out Thy light and Thy truth, and let them lead us to Thy holy hill.

We pray for all Christian people and for all communities of such. Wherever there are hearts that

seek to love and serve and honour Thy holy Name, and to do Thy will, may Thy presence there be abundantly felt, as well as plainly manifested to others. O Lord! bless all Christian people that are trying to do Thy work, and to live godly lives in this world. Direct them all; be with them all; bless their efforts; and grant, we beseech Thee, that amongst those who profess Thy Name there may be many more raised up on whose hearts shall be laid the solemn responsibilities to be the witnesses to that Name.

Now we would commend to Thee ourselves, our country. We pray for our Sovereign, and for all rulers and persons in authority and influence in this land. We beseech Thee that all lands may share more and more in the joy of the salvation which is for all the world; and may be drawn, in true heart-obedience, nearer and nearer to Him Who is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords; to Whom the world belongs because for the world He has died; even Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XLVI

O Lord, our God! may these blessed hopes and thoughts of which we have been reading sink deep into all our beliefs and hearts, and ever influence us, that we may always feel that we are of the household of God, and may not only rejoice in the dignities and privileges, but feel the weight and solemnity of the responsibilities, of belonging to Thy family and Thy servants.

We thank Thee that though we have often tried to wrench ourselves away from Thee, and have indeed sought to depart into the far land from our Father, that we might enjoy what we had without Him, and live as we liked, Thou hast made us nigh by the blood

of Christ. May we therefore have no more the hearts and wills of strangers and foreigners, but know that our native soil and our happy home is in Thy house, and in Thy heart.

We thank Thee for Him Who is our peace, Who has come to them that were afar off, and has brought them nigh. And we beseech Thee that we may yield gladly to all the drawings of His life and death, of His glory and of His Spirit sent forth into the world, and may indeed be drawn near to Thee and kept always close at Thy side.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for that better life which comes to those that are dead to sin, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to yield our hearts for, and to, that great love wherewith Thou hast loved us when we had no love to Thee; and wouldst help us to fulfil Thy purposes, that in us there may be showed forth Thy exceeding riches of grace, by Thy loving-kindness in Christ Jesus towards even such sinful creatures as we are. We pray Thee to help us to exercise that faith which brings to us, and keeps as ours, all the gifts of Thy grace and love in the mission of Thy dear Son. And we ask Thee that day by day as we live in the world, we may walk there as Christ's witnesses, Christ's men redeemed from it by Him, and made free by the liberty which He bestows.

We come to Thee this evening with thankfulness for all Thy great mercies to us of every sort; they beggar our praises, they surpass our thoughts. We can only say with Thy servant of old, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me?' We thank Thee that Thou dost count that we render to Thee the best praise when we take the benefits Thou hast

bestowed, and in the enjoyment of the cup of salvation hallow all, by calling upon the name of the Lord. May it be so with all of us, that nothing which Thou dost send, whether it be joyful or sad, may come between us and Thee, but everything may draw us to Thyself, and help us to see Thee. May all our work and all our enjoyments, and every changing circumstance, bind us more closely to Thyself. We need Thee at every moment. As we recognise the moment's need may we be aware of the moment's supply, and always find that Thy grace comes swiftly to fill every empty place in our hearts, and to minister to us every needful help at the right moment.

We pray Thee for Thy guidance, for Thy wisdom, for Thy strength, for Thy patience to be with us in all the various discipline and exercise of our daily duties and circumstances. O help us, we beseech Thee, to keep Thee ever before us, amidst the whirl of changeful things; and may no multiplicity of duties, nor any pressure of care, nor any gnawing anxiety ever avail to interrupt our tranquil possession of the peace of God which passes all understanding.

We beseech Thee for help to live as becomes Thy children. May we adorn the doctrine in all things, great or small; and as we go through our daily life, and come in contact with all sorts and conditions of men, may they take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. May they see our good works, and glorify, not us, but our Father in Heaven.

We beseech Thee for Thy help in our worship. Guide our thoughts and minds and hearts. Whether we hear or speak, let us do it in Thy strength; and may that strength stimulate us to do Thy work more joyfully and continually. Prosper our work with Thy

blessing, which alone makes our ministry efficacious. Bless the work of all of us who may instruct the young, or in any other way may be seeking to do Christ's will, and make known His name. We thank Thee that there are many ways by which Thy servants can say that they have found the Messias. And we beseech Thee that all Thy people may be emboldened and stimulated to be Christ's witnesses and heralds; that from each of us may sound out the word of the Lord.

Hear us, we pray Thee, now, O Lord! Accept our thanks for Thy manifold good gifts to us; forgive all our many sins; and grant us Thy blessing as we worship before Thee; accept and answer us, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

XLVII

O Lord, our God! We draw near to Thee now, and pray Thee to help us that we may indeed draw near to Thee, and not deceive ourselves and mock Thee with words which have little or nothing corresponding to them in our desires and thoughts.

We bless Thee, O Lord! for all the rich fulness of strength and peace and power and glory, which wait for us to take, when we come near to Thee. We pray that our hearts may be inclined now to desire, to long for, and believingly to accept, the things that are freely given to us of God.

We bless Thee for that great Saviour Who has come to bring us life and immortality, and all the blessings that our spirits require. And we pray that, more and more, He may be to us the Christ Whom having not seen we love, and that steadfastly believing in Him we

may rejoice and know, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even before we receive, the end of our faith, even the full salvation of our souls.

Blessed be Thy name! that unto us has come the long-looked-for though promised salvation into which angels desire to look. We thank Thee that we can pass into the very sanctuary and handle the precious things that are there. We bless Thee for our access with confidence to Thee through the blood of sprinkling, and by the faith in that blood. And we beseech Thee that more and more our lives may be filled with Jesus Christ, may be shaped after His pattern, may be made joyful with His joy and strong with His immortal strength.

We thank Thee, Lord! that we can bring to Thee all our weakness, all our unworthiness, all our sin; and, whilst we confess it, can receive Thy healing kiss and the assurance of Thy pardoning mercy. O do thou help us to understand, and penitently to recognise, and frankly to confess to Thee everything and anything in ourselves, in our character, or in our daily lives, which may hinder our daily growth in Thy likeness; and may come between us and Thee. Show us, O Lord! all that may so work in us; and do Thou help us heartily to hate, and earnestly to seek after deliverance from, the captivity of all such wayward inclinations, and evil thoughts and things.

We pray that Jesus Christ may become more and more to us precious; and that in the joy of possessing the true treasure for heart and mind we may set less store by the fleeting treasures that are here.

Forgive all that has been amiss, we pray; breathe into us the firm resolve to war against sin. Help us in the conflict, and give us grace, day by day, to apprehend

and acquire more and more of the image of Thy dear Son, and to come nearer and nearer unto Thee.

We beseech Thee to accept us as we draw near to Thee now with the petition that Thou wouldst be with us in our hour of worship. We thank Thee for the opportunity of thus uniting our prayers and aspirations, and of together meditating for a little while on Thy great love to us in Jesus Christ. And we pray that our services may always be full of blessing to those who partake in them; and that hearers and speakers alike may have Thy rich grace resting upon them. Do thou manifest Thyself to us this evening; draw near to each. If there be in mind, will, or heart, anything hindering us from entering into the full enjoyment of our worship, O Lord! take it away from us. Break up our indifference; melt our coldness; quicken our lethargy, strengthen our faith; inflame our love; make wide our desires; and give us Thy gracious presence, and that good Spirit which is the best of all good gifts, and Thy fullest answer to Thy children's prayers.

We pray for one another in all the variety of our circumstances. We beseech Thee that if there are any amongst us who are in trouble Thou wouldst draw near such, and guide all who are in difficulty. Be the Guide and Companion of those who are friendless and solitary. And we pray that Thou wouldst heal wounded hearts, bind up broken spirits, and help us to bear what Thy providence sends, with the peaceful assurance that 'all things work together for good to them that love God.'

We pray Thee to accept us now; to draw near in our hour of worship; to forgive all our sins, which are many; and to grant us Thy gracious presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

XLVIII

O Lord, our gracious Father! bow and draw all our hearts, we beseech Thee, to Thyself, that we may truly have fellowship with Thee now, and enter into the secret place of the Most High.

We thank Thee for the access with confidence into the depths of Thy heart, and the innermost chambers of Thy house which we have through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Our faith would look upwards, whither He has gone, the Advocate and the Intercessor, to present our poor petitions, perfumed and made acceptable with the much incense of His. And we would claim our place, lowly and sinful as we are, where Christ is. May we make Him our treasure, that our hearts may be with Him in the heavenly places, however our outward lives are still entangled with the things of earth. May we more and more feel that we belong to the unseen world, that there is our home, there our love, that thither we journey, that thence we draw our strength.

Forgive, we beseech Thee, all the imperfections of our past, our many wanderings of heart and mind, our frequent forgetfulness of Thee, and of our duty towards Thee and to our fellows. Pardon all the waywardness and the worldliness which have mingled with our best and holiest moments. Do Thou cleanse our hearts throughly, we beseech Thee, by Thy abiding Spirit and mighty grace, and mould us more and more manifestly and fully into the likeness of Jesus Christ. May love transform us, and beholding Him may we grow like Him Whom we behold. Help us to see Him Who is unseen; and because we love Him, to 'rejoice with joy unspeakable,' and already filled with the foretaste of eternal glory.

Grant, we pray Thee, Thy gracious help in all our daily work and the manifold occupations of our lives. We bless Thee that however diverse these may be, we may do them all as unto the Lord. And we pray that so doing them they may be done heartily, cheerfully, and with all our power. We bless Thee for the greatness which Thou dost attach to the smallest of our duties, when we think of them as enjoined by and done for Thee. And we beseech Thee that we may more and more carry that sense, of having to do with God, into everything; that life may all become sacred and full of deeper meanings and possible blessings; and be delivered from its much weariness and smallness because we link it all with God and eternity.

We pray Thee for Thy blessing as we are gathered here this evening, and beseech Thee that upon our work and worship Thy grace may rest; and that whatsoever we may think or say may be taught us by Thee, and be taken care of by Thee as it passes into other hearts. O Lord! let Thy Spirit ever go with Thy preached word, amongst us, and elsewhere; and grant, we pray Thee, that whensoever Thy servants open their lips it may be to magnify Jesus Christ; and that where, therefore, Christ is magnified, there hearts and minds may be inclined to welcome and submit to Him.

Bless us, we pray Thee, as we are gathered now; give us a message from Thyself. Lift away from us any unfitnesses that we may have contracted for Thy service. If those of us who have been washed have, in any measure, soiled our feet in the muddy ways of life, we beseech Thee to cleanse these; and to make us clean every whit. And grant, we pray Thee, that

our gathering together thus may have some tendency to bless and hallow, to calm and gladden, to enlighten and to strengthen, every one of us.

We pray for all that are in any special need of Thy gracious presence and help. We beseech Thee to comfort them that are in sorrow with Thine own strong and gracious consolations. And we pray for all that are on beds of sickness and weariness, and for all who are anxiously watching by them; and ask Thee that, according to their several necessities, Thy servants may be strengthened; whilst the outward man perishes may the inward man be renewed day by day. And for those who may be drawing near to the end of life, grant that the vision of the greater life of which it is the beginning may be very clear and very sweet.

O Lord! Be Thou near Thy children in all their trials, and grant that they may then find, even more than in the bright hours, that the Pillar of Fire gives light.

We pray Thee to look upon us now, and grant us Thy blessing as we worship before Thee; in Thy mercy to forgive all our sins; and to help and be with us; for our Saviour Christ's sake.

XLIX

O Lord, our gracious Father! and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we bless Thee that we too can come with confidence and beseech Thee, with assurance that our prayers are not in vain when they are offered in that mighty Name. We pray Thee to help each of us that it may more and more be true of us that to us 'to live is Christ'; and to make our conversation

more and more such as becometh the gospel of Christ. May we live by the laws of that great City which is beyond the things of time, and whereof all Thy true children are indeed the citizens. May we stand fast in one mind. May we in all things be able to adorn the doctrine. May Jesus Christ be the motive and the power and the reward of all that we do. May our thoughts centre on Him Who is the truth. May our feet travel by Him Who is the way to Thee. May our deadness be changed into life, through participation in the life of Him Who is the Life for all that live.

Grant us, we pray, more and more possession, conscious possession, of that better life which is redeemed from corruption, and is growing in all things into the Image of Him that created it. May we bear in our hearts increasingly the love that makes light. May our faith work by love, and our love be manifested in all the round of our daily duty.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst shine into our spirits with the joyful assurance that Thou art our Father and our Friend. We pray that Thou wouldst perfect that which concerneth us; and if Thy work is begun in any of us, complete it, O Lord! at the day of Jesus Christ. Help us day by day to yield ourselves more joyfully, believingly, and completely to the renewing and the quickening power of Thy grace, to the illuminating power of Thy truth, to the hallowing power of Thy Holy Spirit. Subdue in us all that is evil there, and is still unregenerate. Give more and more force to the seed of the Kingdom, if it have been planted in our hearts. And though it may be but as a grain of mustard seed may there be life in it. And may each of us 'grow in the grace and

knowledge of our Lord and Saviour,' and bring forth first the blade, and then the ear, and then the green corn in the ear. And do Thou watch over the springing thereof, that nothing may subdue or destroy; and help us to guard our hearts, and to keep ourselves from everything that might mar the abundant fruit, the reward of the work of the great Husbandman.

We beseech Thee to be with us in our worship of this evening, and to grant us the light of Thy face to shine visibly and manifestly in all our hearts. We thank Thee that turning away for an hour from the occupations that engross, and perhaps from the anxieties that harass and gnaw, we may come into the secret place of the Most High. May we not only, gathered here together in this building, in outward form, seem to be drawing near to Thee, but in the very depths of our souls may we all of us feel the touch of Thy hand, and the nearness of Thy presence; and listen to, and catch, and obey, the whispers of Thy 'still small voice.' Grant that our gathering here together may never be that of a company of men whose devotions may be led, and whose minds may be instructed, by the words of a brother, but a gathering together of God's children to Him, come to take away what He is pleased to bestow.

Prosper us in our hour of worship; and give us Thy blessing when we try to speak a word in Thy Name. Grant that each may go away with the strengthening of good within us, and some weakening of the power of evil upon us.

Bless us in our various occupations and circumstances. We desire to commend to Thee any amongst us, or belonging to our community, who may be in sorrow or trouble. Draw near to such with Thy

gracious influences. Speak peace to our hearts. If any are in weakness, in bodily pain or sickness, or apparently have nearly done with life, do Thou graciously bless and succour such Thy servants, and speak Thine own comfort and strength-giving words that whilst the outward man perishes the inward man may be renewed day by day.

We pray Thee to be with each of us according to our diverse necessities, to bless us in our work and daily callings, to bless us in our families and homes; to grant us grace, wheresoever we go, to carry with us the Name of Jesus; and in all places to glorify that great Saviour; and to set forth the reality and the power of His great salvation.

We beseech Thee to accept us, to forgive all our sins, to grant us Thy gracious presence; and now hear and manifest Thyself to us; through Christ our Saviour.

L

We thank Thee, O Lord! that sufficient unto the day is the God thereof, and the goodness that comes from His hand, and His loving heart. We would come near to Thee now, drawn by Thy mercies, and by the assurance that in Thee is all that we need. Give to us, we pray Thee, the desires rightly ordered which seek first the best things, and trust to Thee to do all things that we need besides. May our supreme effort be directed, not so much to advancing in the world as to growing in likeness to Thyself, and in nearness to Thee.

Help us, we pray Thee, to understand aright the comparative importance of the things seen and temporal, and of the things unseen and eternal. And

oh! give to us such a sure possession of Thy love and of Thy felt power and Presence that we may have our treasure in Thee, and our hearts have no temptation to wander away from Thyself.

O Lord! We know, when we are wisest, that Thou art best. We know, when we bethink ourselves, that there are no real joys and no abiding satisfactions except in fellowship with God, and in doing His will. But Thou knowest that our weakness and our passions and sins, and the practices of men around us, and the necessities of our daily lives, do so often deceive us, and draw us away; blinding us to that which is most bright, and causing us to forget that which we most deeply need.

We pray Thee to forgive all the shortcomings and the failures to hold fast that which we have, and to live by that which we know. We pray Thee to cleanse our hearts from all their waywardness, and all their wanderings, and to fix them upon Thyself. We beseech Thee that more and more it may to us be Christ to live, that His Name may ever be dearest to us, and shrined in the very depths of our hearts' love; that His commandments may be our supreme law, and to please Him our highest aim.

Help us, we pray Thee, in all the various occupations which Thy providence calls upon us to discharge, still to be seeking the one thing, to do what is pleasing in Christ's sight, and to be approved and accepted of Him. Do Thou help us, in whatever may be our daily avocation and profession. O Lord! Thou knowest our various temptations there. And we pray Thee that Thou wouldst keep us from falling into them. Give us, we beseech Thee, a deep knowledge of Thyself and of ourselves. May we walk in the light of Thy

countenance evermore. May the thought that we are in Thy presence be to us a joy as well as a defence. May it keep us from dread. May it keep us from evil. Guide us by Thy wise counsel; and may our hearts be so brought into harmony with Thy holy will that every word and indication of Thy guiding counsel is heard and welcomed by us. Preserve us from unfilial stopping of our ears to Thy voice, and substituting for it the voice of our desires. Help us, day by day, to walk humbly and self-governingly with our Lord.

Look upon us, we beseech Thee, as we are here before Thee this evening; and give us a word from Thyself that may help and strengthen us all for our various duties, and may bring us nearer to Thee; and teach us more and more how great, how loving, how all-sufficient Thou art.

We pray for one another, and ask Thee to comfort any that are in any sorrow with the great consolations of which Thou hast the stores, and which only Thou art able to pour into our souls. We pray for all that may be tried by parting with dear ones. We thank Thee for souls that are departed in Thy faith and fear. We bless Thee for lives devoted to Thyself, and now entering into Thy rest. And we beseech Thee that mourning souls may be cheered and comforted by Thy presence.

We pray Thee that whatever may be the circumstances of any of us we may have present grace for present need; and do Thou, Lord! help us to cast all our care upon Thee, to rest on the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.

Now accept us, we beseech Thee. Give us Thy blessing in our worship. Let Thy Spirit be manifestly felt with us whensoever we gather together, and upon all

the various works of this church and congregation done for Christ, imperfect as they are in their modes and in their completion, we pray that Thy favouring smile may rest, and that many souls may be gathered into Thy Kingdom; and many built up in their most holy faith by our meeting together. For many past days of Christian fellowship some of us would desire to thank Thee, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be with us still; and still minister to us through each other the graces of Thy Spirit and of Thy word.

We pray Thee to hear us now, to take us into Thy care and keeping, to bless us as we remain together, to take away infirmity, to quicken and strengthen to hear and to speak Thy holy word, and to give us Thy word to speak and to hear.

All we ask through Jesus Christ, Who asks it for us better than we can do.

LI

O Lord, our God and Father! we would come to Thee with thankful petitions and with thankfulness that expects in the future as well as praises for the past. Thou hast been merciful to us; surely Thou wilt bless us. Thou hast been with some of us in six troubles, and we will trust to Thee for the seventh, and for all beyond. Thy mercy endureth for ever. Forsake not the works of Thine own hands; perfect that which concerneth us, we beseech Thee, and having begun a good work in us, continue the same to the day of the Lord Jesus.

We draw near to Thee now with humble praise for all Thy great mercy and goodness to us, manifested to us in more ways than our treacherous memories can recall,

and continued to us notwithstanding all our ill deserts, and our many wanderings and our much misuse of Thy many benefits.

We bless Thee for that great name which Thou hast taken to Thyself, and which Thou hast so vindicated by Thy dealings with us unthankful,—of 'the giving God,' Who givest to all men liberally and upbraidest not.

We thank Thee for undeserved mercies. We thank Thee for the continuance of often misused benefits. We thank Thee that Thou dost not pluck away our joys when we forget the Hand that gives them, but that Thou dost continue with patience, endless because it is Divine, wooing us to Thyself, and hoping that the mercy of God may lead us to repentance.

We beseech Thee that all Thy good gifts, so lavishly and long bestowed upon us, may indeed bind our hearts to Thyself, and that more and more we may be preserved from every wandering desire, from all disobedience and neglect, from all unfaithfulness and folly, that seeks other satisfaction elsewhere than in Thyself.

Do Thou forgive, O Lord! our many sins, and anything in our thoughts or doings to-day that may disturb the fulness and the blessedness of our communion with Thee now, do Thou mercifully take away. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst wash the feet soiled on the paths of life, and that Thou wouldst help us to draw near to Thee now with true hearts in full assurance of faith, sprinkled from an evil conscience and washed with pure water.

We ask that Thy mercy may draw near to each of us in this quiet hour of worship, and that Thou wouldst shed abroad Thy grace upon our hearts when we hear

and when we speak Thy holy word. Do Thou guide our thoughts; do Thou give us a message for utterance; do Thou help us to glorify Thy Name, and do Thou make Thy truth mighty in our hearts, and grant that it may more and more be the man of our counsel, the lamp unto our feet, and the light unto our path.

We beseech Thee to remember all who may be in any kind of sorrow or trouble this evening. If there are any such here who have any special care or anxiety weighing upon them, the Lord be very near to them. And wherever Thy servants have to make experience that this is not their rest, do Thou graciously bless Thy providence, that stirs up the nest, and pours the wine from vessel to vessel. And grant, we beseech Thee, that all of us, and all our brethren, when we pass through any darkness, may have Thee for our light, when we pass through the fire may have Thee for our Companion, when we pass through the waters may not be overwhelmed thereby.

We beseech Thee to prosper all the work of Thy servants. The Lord make His prophets tenfold more than they are, and make their words and their labours more simple, more earnest, more full of faith, more empty of self, and more fit to receive Thy rich blessing.

Let Thy grace be upon each of us here before Thee in all our different conditions and avocations; and do Thou guide us all by Thy counsel, and help us to stay our hearts upon Thyself, and to love Thee fully, and constantly to realise the presence of the peace that comes from Jesus Christ our Saviour that nothing may draw us away from Him, and no evil may befall us.

Strengthen us that we may stand in every evil day,

and having done all, may stand. Do Thou grant each of us, we pray Thee, Thy continual presence and help, and let that grace which is granted to all them that love the Lord Jesus in incorruption be granted to us, to deepen and purify our love which brings Him to us.

We pray Thee to regard us gathered here in Thy presence now. Forgive our many sins, and grant us Thy gracious help in this hour of worship; through Christ our Saviour.

LII

O Lord, our Father! Thou hast taught us to open our mouths wide by the promise that Thou wilt fill them. Thou dost enlarge our desires and our conceptions of Thy great purposes of love by many gracious words and by many gracious deeds. But yet we thank Thee that Thy love surpasses our scanty thought, and that the fulness of God is more than we can ask or think. We beseech Thee, then, because Thou hast made us bold by promising it, that we may be filled with all that fulness. And may we receive all Thy power that worketh in us. Come again, and be faithful in keeping us.

We pray, as Thy servant has taught us, that we may be strengthened with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man, in order that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; and that so we may be able, possessing Him, to apprehend the length, and depth, and breadth, and height of that immeasurable love of God. And we pray that we may so know it as to be possessed and filled by it, and that all our sin, and all our creatural weakness, and all our waywardness of perverse departure from Thee may be overcome, and our hearts fixed upon Thyself, so that we may never stray away from

Him Who is our peace, nor cast behind us the true riches of Thy grace.

Lord! look upon us, we beseech Thee, as we are assembled here this evening; a company of sinful creatures, who need Thy help; a company of men and women for whom Christ died, and whom Thou dost desire to fill with all the grace which is purchased by His blood. We beseech Thee that we may none of us go empty away. May we open our hearts wide for the entrance of Thy mercy and Thy power. Clothe us with Thine own strength, make us righteous with Thine own imparted righteousness. Give us to possess the life of Jesus Christ which dieth no more. And may we have conquered sin, and in the strength of that life may we live, lifted above the cares and changes of this mortal life, and even whilst we are here on earth having the roots of our lives hid with Christ in God. Help us thus, we pray Thee, O Lord! to draw the highest blessing, and make the best use of all earthly providences, and of all Thy gifts, and all Thy withdrawals.

We beseech Thee that whatever may be the character of our present experience in this world we may have Thy help to use it aright. Do Thou strengthen us for, and even by, our daily duties. May they make us more fit for the apprehension and the possession of Thy highest Gift. And may our work in the world bring us to Thyself, from Whom alone comes the power to do anything heartily and well.

We pray Thee that Thou wouldst be very especially near to any of us who may have any kind of difficulty, outward or spiritual or mental, to contend with. And do Thou grant, we pray Thee, that all our trials and struggles, all our disappointments and losses, all our

difficulties and changes, may bring us nearer to Thyself, in Whom is no change, and to possess Whom is everlasting gain.

Help us to love Thee better every day that we live; and whatever may be our present trials the Lord sustain us, the Lord guide us, the Lord make us more than conquerors through Him that loves us.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing to rest upon our worship of this evening. We pray that the word of the Lord may be glorified among us. We beseech Thee that the Name and the work of Jesus Christ our Saviour may ever be our theme, and ever witness to its own Divine origin by its effects on them that hear. We pray that Thy Spirit may be abundantly poured out upon this, and upon all our services, and that whensoever any of us may, in any fashion, try to do anything for the sake of our dear Lord, there may we have the assurance of Thy furthering help. There may we, in due time, see the result of Thy smile and blessing, in fruit that shall be found after many days unto praise and honour and glory.

O Lord! look upon us as we are assembled now. Bless all our brethren and sisters who are absent from our meeting this evening. Be Thou in the homes of Thy people, and help Thy servants to walk within their houses, with perfect hearts, and be the priests of their households, and their guides to God.

We pray Thee to accept us now; to forgive all our sins; to grant us Thy gracious help and presence in this hour of worship, and to hear us when we cry; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LIII

O LORD, our gracious Father! Thou hast set us the example of overcoming evil with good. Thou dost pour out Thy mercies upon the unthankful and the disobedient. And we bless Thee that our utmost forbearance and patience can only be a finite image of that infinite patience and forbearance on which alone we can hope.

We would come to Thee then, O Lord! drawn by the mercies of God and the wonders of grace which belong to Thee, and bless Thee for the coals of fire which Thou dost heap upon the heads of Thy prodigal children; the lavish gifts by which Thou dost seek to draw us all back to Thyself. Surely Thou recompensest evil for evil to no man! We bless Thee for all which Thou hast forgiven to us, because Thou hast forgiven so much, hast given so much. May we give ourselves to Thee, and yield not only bodies but spirits, not only spirits but bodies, unto Thee as our living sacrifice and reasonable service.

We beseech Thee to help us, day by day, that we may make our own all these great graces and virtues of which we have been reading, and may more and more covet earnestly the best gifts, and use faithfully the gifts which Thou hast bestowed upon us; with simplicity and with cheerfulness and with perseverance doing whatsoever Thou dost lay upon us to do, whether in men's eyes it may be greater or smaller. Mould us more and more after the image of Thine own dear Son, and help us day by day to take more kindly and more deeply the lines of Christ's likeness. May we bear His image and superscription, and show by our daily life that to Him we belong. May the likeness of

Heaven shine more and more through the lineaments of earth. May our deeds proclaim how good is the tree from which they come, being grafted to the living Vine from Whom alone comes all fruit unto holiness.

We pray Thee to help us in all our daily duties and discipline, and to guide us by Thy gracious counsel step by step along our earthly paths. We thank Thee that Thou dost not send us a warfare at our own charges, and hast never yet reaped where Thou didst not sow, nor demanded before Thou hadst given. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst help us thus with grace sufficient for all circumstances and duties, and wheresoever Thou dost send us, there, O Lord! make Thyself present with us, and whatsover Thou dost lay upon us, for that, O Lord! give us strength and patience. Guide us ever, by Thy wise counsel, and help us to keep our ears and our hearts open for the lightest whisper, and slightest indication of Thy holy will. May we not look upon the world and its providences as so many are tempted to do, forgetting the Person Who guides it all, but may we be able to see Thee in everything that befalls us, and to recognise Thee in all our changing circumstances, and to acquit ourselves in them as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and beloved children of their Father in Heaven.

We desire to commend one another to Thy loving care, O Lord! and pray Thee to keep Thy hand upon us according to our different necessities, and to minister strength to us that may suffice for our daily need, of whatever kind it is. We pray Thee especially for any that are in sorrow, for any Whom Thou dost call upon to part with dear ones. We pray Thee that Thy great consolations may abound wherever tribulation seems to abound; and whatsoever heart is wounded may Thy

gentle touch, and the sufficient balm which Thou canst bring, be bestowed. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be very near Thy servants who may be in various ways making experience of the vanity and the care and the sorrow that blend with all earthly joys and possessions. We beseech Thee that, if any of us are thus exercised, we may hear the great Voice that is speaking in our afflictions bid us come up hither; and may enter into the secret place of the Most High, and find that God is more because the world is less.

O Lord! be near us as we are together this evening, and direct our thoughts and hearts that our meditations may be profitable, and may lead us all nearer to Thyself and give us all a fuller possession of that only possession which makes rich, and adds no sorrow, the possession of Thyself as revealed in Jesus Christ.

We commend one another to Thee. We pray that Thou wouldst bless each of us in our various duties and our daily life; that Thou wouldst dwell with us in our homes, and go with us into our places of business and occupations, and that Thou wouldst lead us each in the paths of righteousness which to the faithful heart are ever paths of peace.

We beseech Thee to bless all Christian people, and grant to all our brethren, the many members of the one body, Thine own gracious Spirit. May that one life truly animate the body of Thy professing Church, and be vigorous in all its members. Prosper all the work of Thy people upon earth; bless all faithful souls who are trying to spread the name of Jesus Christ. May the Kingdoms of the earth learn to reverence and love Him, and may all the perturbations of nations lead to the inauguration and establishment of the perfect reign of the perfect King. Thou, O Lord! art high above all

the tumults of the people, and stillest the noise of the waves. We beseech Thee to bring Thy Church to the desired haven. We pray Thee to hear us now, grant us Thy blessing in this hour of worship, and to manifest Thyself to each of us as we may severally require; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LIV

O Lord! our Father Almighty, help us, we beseech Thee, with believing hearts, and childlike love, to claim the fulfilment of these great promises that Thou wilt be a Father to us, and we Thy sons and daughters. Grant that in the strength of that happy sonship we may be able to overcome all the evil within ourselves, and to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord and of our Father God.

We beseech Thee to breathe upon all our hearts as we are gathered here in Thy presence now, and to draw us very near to Thyself in the faithful acceptance and use of all the mercies and the privileges which Thou dost extend toward us. We thank Thee that Thou hast come so near to us, and art in Christ reconciling the world to Thyself, and beseeching us to be reconciled to Thyself. O Lord! may none of us receive the grace of God in vain, nor any of us turn away from that merciful voice which speaks in love from Heaven, which speaks in Thy gospel, which speaks in our hearts, which speaks in all the providences of our daily lives, and ever is calling us to seek Thy face. May our hearts reply, 'Thy face, Lord! will we seek'; and then surely Thou wilt not hide Thy face from us.

We beseech Thee to cleanse us; for without Thy cleansing and quickening grace we can make but poor work of purifying ourselves. We beseech Thee to draw near to us with Thy great loving Spirit, which may burn as fire within us and melt our hardness; that the dross may all run off. We pray that our faith may ever work by love, and manifest itself in our daily conduct. We pray that the life of Jesus Christ, which is in them that love Him, may make us 'free from the law of sin' within, 'and death.' We beseech Thee that to this great end even our poor worship and service this evening may, in some degree, be blessed to us all. O Lord! may we be of those who, 'though sorrowful,' for many reasons, yet are 'always rejoicing'; and, because we know ourselves to have nothing and would trust ourselves altogether unto Thee, do in very deed possess all things.

Open Thou our hearts, we pray Thee, to welcome Thy coming. Do Thou, then, come and be to us as light to them that sit in darkness, and as the showers that water the earth, and cause it to bring forth and bud. May all excellences loved of Thee grow up in our characters, and may our spirits be, in the fertility in all good things which they show forth, as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed. Keep us from ever allowing Thy grace to come to us like rain upon the rock, which refuses to receive the fruit-bearing blessing.

Help us this evening, we beseech Thee, in our worship; direct us when we try to meditate together upon Thy word and will. May any anxieties or cares, any distractions or trifles which have possessed any of us throughout this day lose their power upon us, and melt away out of sight whilst we worship here before Thee. Grant that in all our meetings for worship, week-days and

Sundays, here and elsewhere, Thy mercy may thus be upon us, and the word of the Lord, even as ministered by us, may bear witness to itself, and draw many souls to God. O Lord! bless each of us in our various conditions and requirements. Grant us in our daily life Thy daily presence; 'the matter of a day in its day.' Do Thou give to us strength for all that which cometh upon us daily; the many cares and duties of life. May we have our daily bread.

We beseech Thee to accept us now; to forgive all our sins; to grant all sad and suffering souls the peace of Thy presence and the light of Thy love. We pray Thee to take us now into Thy care; to forgive our sins, and to answer us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LV

O Lord! our gracious Father, we have boldness to enter into Thy presence by the new and living Way. And we thank Thee that we have a High Priest Who has entered before us, and is there in Thy presence for ever, presenting His great Sacrifice by which He hath perfected for ever them that are being sanctified. We beseech Thee that in the confidence of that great Intercessor, and resting upon the eternal efficacy of that one Sacrifice for sins for ever, we may each of us draw near now with true hearts holding fast our confidence, since He is faithful that has promised.

We lift up our hearts to Thee, O Lord! for Thou knowest all their waywardness, and their wanderings; and how feeble our best results, and how cold our warmest love. But we pray that Thou wouldst deliver us from ourselves, and wouldst help us never to draw

back, but to be of them that believe to the saving of the soul; and to live day by day making deeper acquaintance ever with Thine own sweet and perfect love in Jesus Christ, and being more fully filled with the power, the peace, and the blessedness that come from union with Thee through Him.

We pray Thee to look upon us as we are gathered here in Thy presence this evening. We rejoice that whatsoever weaknesses we may be aware of, or unaware of, in ourselves; and whatever difficulties or trials or distractions we may have had in the course of our day's work, we can come to Thee once more, as some of us have often come before, and can cast ourselves upon that faithful promise which has never failed them that put their trust in it.

O Lord! look upon us gathered here before Thee now. Give to us some thought from Thyself, some impulse from Thine own might, some moulding of heart by the warmth of Thine own love, some illumination of spirit by the light of Thine own face. And grant, we pray Thee, that as we worship here, we may have God Himself to speak to us, that we may speak to God right and wise things, and to one another the things that pertain to our peace. We pray for Thy help in every part of our service. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst strengthen us to meditate upon Thy will and word, and to lay to heart the messages which Thou mayst send to us through the ministration of a brother. We beseech Thee that nothing imperfect or feeble about the human instrument may interfere with the completeness and the power of the word ministered.

We commend to Thee, O Lord! each in Thy presence according to all the diversity of our characters and cir-

cumstances, and pray that whatever we may most need, —whether it be the thing that we most wish or no—may be granted to us; and may we all, to whatsoever other sources we resort for any good or blessing, come chiefly to Him with Whom is the fountain of life; and Who makes us to drink of the river of His pleasure. Grant that if any of us have any special burden or trouble upon our hearts or thoughts, we may receive from Thee the special grace for which the sense of special need is given us to prepare the way and open the door. O Lord! the more we feel our own weakness the more may we be drawn and driven to Thy might. And do Thou comfort those in trouble; draw near to every sad and weary heart. Speak patience to all who have heavy crosses to carry, and see no way of ever losing or lightening their weight. May we all be able to cling fast to the belief that all things do indeed 'work together for good to them that love God.' And may we, loving Him, find that there is good, and good only, even in what the world calls, and our hearts feel to be in some manner, evil. We pray that Thou wouldst be with any from whom Thou hast taken away the desire of their eyes. We bless Thee for useful lives closed in peaceful trust. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst succour and be the Companion of the widow and the fatherless, and the Helper of all that mourn.

And now, Lord, we commit ourselves to Thy gracious care. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be with us in our hour of worship, forgiving all our past evil, and quickening us even by these outward services, so that for the time to come we may live more as Thy children ought to live. Hear, help, bless and answer us, we pray Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LVI

O LORD, our God, we thank Thee that we have access to Thee from all parts of the earth, and that wherever there is a longing and a seeking soul there is a coming and a finding God. We come to Thee this evening to offer the ancient prayer and to plead the ancient conditions. We need Thee; we have wandered from Thee; we would turn from all our transgressions wherewith we have transgressed against Thee, and would confess our sin, for there is no man that sinneth not, and we pray that Thou wouldst teach us each to know the plague of our own hearts. And then, Lord, hear Thou in Heaven and forgive and answer the supplications of Thy servants, for surely Thou hast taught us to be Thine by a better redemption, and hast brought us out of a hotter furnace of fire than ever Thy servants of old were in. So we come to Thee, Lord, with the assurance that all the joyful confidence of past ages may be repeated by us, and that we too may bless the Lord our God, Whose faithful word has failed in no good thing that He hath spoken to us. The Lord be with us as He was with our fathers; as He has been with all the generations of them that have sought His face. Help each of us, day by day, in all the variety of circumstance, and trial, and joy, and duty, which befall us, to have resort continually to that strong habitation wherein whosoever runneth is safe.

We bless Thee for the manifested Name, good, and enough for us; sweet with infinite sweetness, and mighty with everlasting strength. We beseech Thee that that Name may be to us life and joy and peace, and may keep our happy souls above all the tempta-

tions and the tribulations of this changing life. Oh! for firmer and more abiding and more operative and happier faith in God, in Christ. Oh! help us, we beseech Thee, to yield ourselves more entirely unto Him, and Thee, not only in the moments of our uttered prayers, but in the varying circumstances of daily life and trial. May our souls be submitted to Thine, in the assured confidence that all which Thou doest is good, and that all which comes to us is Thy doing; and do Thou help us to enter into that unshaken and unshakable peace which belongs to them who are anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, not forgetting thanksgiving, make their requests known unto God.

We draw near to Thee this evening, O Lord! from very different circumstances; having had another day of diverse duties. Thou knowest each of us, and all the depths of our wants, far better than we know them ourselves. So we do not venture to prescribe to Thee, and yet we thank Thee that Thou hast permitted us to bring our wishes to Thee, though they may often be unwise wishes. We pray that Thou wouldst give us, not so much the things that we desire as those that we need; that Thou wouldst help us more and more to bridle our wishes by Thine own, and to seek to be sure of Thy purposes ere we ask.

We pray Thee to be near us in our service of this evening, to guide us in all our approach to Thee. We thank Thee that we can turn away from the duties of this life—though these too may be made means of worship—and find refreshment and strength in thus together remembering God, and drawing near to Him. And we pray that Thy good Spirit may be poured out upon us all, and that this gathering of ours this

evening may be abundantly blessed to each of us, leading us into closer communion with Thyself, and strengthening our resolves to live soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world.

We pray for each in Thy presence. If any of us have troubles or sorrows to carry, do Thou help us, O Lord! patiently to bear, and thankfully to accept, whatsoever consolations and meditations—brooks by the way—Thou mayst give to thirsty lips. Let us not refuse either Thy chastening or Thy comfort. We pray for all. Thou knowest our wants; Thou knowest Thine own purposes concerning us. Surely Thou dost mean good, and good only, for each of us. May we trust Thee; may we work with Thee that all things may work together for good to us, because we love God, and seek to know Him better. We beseech Thee to prosper all the work done by us as a congregation and a church. Bless the preaching of Thy gospel, the teaching of the young, and every form of Christian activity in operation among us. May we all be workers together with God, and give ourselves more earnestly than we have ever done to discharge the responsibilities which the possession of Christ's gospel lays upon us. Now hear us, O Lord! draw near to us as we wait in Thy presence; helping us in hearing and speaking, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LVII

O Lord, our gracious and merciful God! surely Thy loving-kindness and condescension are strange to us, and it is Thy gentleness that hath stooped to our lowness, and dost give to us all that is needful, and make us great. We thank Thee that the experiences

of Thy servant of old, of which we have been reading, are truly repeated to all them that put their trust in Thee, though the form of Thy deliverance may be different. Our cry to Thee, strange as it is, can come into Thine ear, and Thou hearest even our voice, blessed be God! Who hath not turned away our prayer nor His mercy from us.

We thank Thee for all the wondrous effects that are produced still in men's lives and hearts by humble and faithful prayer. Still it is true that as Thou dost hear, the earth trembles, and that Thou dost come in all Thy majesty to make haste and deliver one poor soul that has cried to Thee. We beseech Thee that we may live in the confidence that it is no vain thing to call upon the Lord, and that at every time of need and every moment of darkness, and at all times of love and hope and joy, our hearts may be ever turned to Thee, and we enter more and more into the sweetness and the power of fellowship with Thyself.

O Lord! look down upon us, we pray Thee, as we are gathered here before Thee this evening. Give to each of us all which Thou seest we need of strength and godliness, for peace and joy. We pray that Thou wouldst cast the shield of Thy salvation around us. We pray that Thou wouldst teach us how to fight the good fight of faith, and in all our conflicts with difficulties or trials or temptations may we be more than conquerors through Him that loves us. We beseech Thee that Thy candle may enlighten any darkness, and Thy presence may cheer and give company in any gloom and solitude. We pray that wheresoever Thou dost lead us we may realise that Thou goest with us, and may we never try to shake off the remembrance of Thy presence, and so

to lose the comfort of Thy support. Thou art indeed our buckler and the horn of our salvation and our high tower. May we all make Thee our God, in Whom we perfectly, and always, trust. Thy way is perfect; Thou art ready to make our ways perfect. Mould us into Thine own likeness, we beseech Thee; set our feet upon a rock; establish our goings; help us in all that we have to undertake, and plan, and perform. May we be kept from all errors and sins, and be led, and yield to the leading, in the way of righteousness which is ever the path of peace.

O Lord! we thank Thee for all Thy past blessings. We beseech Thee that our eyes may be open, and our hearts ready to recognise, and be profoundly grateful for, the many mercies of Thy loving providence. Guide us all by Thy counsel; direct us by Thy Spirit. Abide in us that we may walk in the way of Thy commandments, and grant to us day by day a firmer hold upon Thy love, a more intelligent and clear apprehension of the meaning of Thy word as of Thy providences. Strengthen us that at all times we may be yielding ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, and estate, unto Thy gracious appointment, and seek most of all to do Thy will.

We pray for Thy pardon, for all that has been defective and less pure and good than it might have been in our daily lives and our habitual thoughts and attitude towards Thyself. Cleanse our hearts, O Lord! and may we not be intolerant of Thy cleansing processes, nor ever shut our hearts against the entrance of Thy cleansing grace. By Thy discipline of us in daily life, and by Thy communication to us of Thine own gracious Spirit, make us more completely what Thou wouldst have us to be. And Oh! may we not

resist either the pruning-knife or any of the culture of the Lord of the vineyard.

Guide us this evening in all our words and our meditations, and our aspirations after Thyself. We thank Thee for an hour of prayer; we pray that we may not waste any of its moments. We bless Thee that in the midst of the stress of daily duties we may thus gather together and draw near to Thee with all the strength that comes from the union of those that are like-minded. Thou dost often manifest Thyself to Thy children in solitude; Thou dost often manifest Thyself to them when they are gathered together with one accord. We pray that we may not be strangers to Thy manifestation, but may know what it is to be alone, and to see the great vision, and may know what it is to find Christ in the midst of us when we meet in His name.

O Lord! bless us in all our work; bless us as members of this Christian community; pour out Thy Spirit upon us individually and collectively; may there be more faith, more love, more hope, more diligence, less worldliness, more Christlikeness in all our lives. We pray Thee to succour and comfort any that are in sorrow. Draw near all who, from any special reason, may specially need Thy intervention or illumination, and grant to each of us to treasure in our hearts what God says to us, and does for us, and to obey all His commandments and appropriate all His gifts. We beseech Thee to hear us, to grant us Thy presence as we wait before Thee; to forgive our many sins, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

LVIII

O Lord, our merciful Father! help us, we beseech Thee, to lift up true hearts to Thee now; for surely we need Thy help, and we need it most when we seek Thy face, for our souls cleave unto the dust, and it must be Thy word that quickens us. Draw near to us then, and whatever may have been our circumstances or occupations to-day, grant that we may be able to leave all hindrances behind, and beneath us, and to come into the secret place of the Most High; and truly feel that we are speaking into ears that hear, and pleading with a heart that loves.

We thank Thee, O Lord! for all Thy great and wondrous mercies given to us, in Jesus Christ our Saviour. May we indeed be willing to be united with Him in suffering, if need be, and since need is, that we may be joined with Him in the eternal glory in which He reigns. We thank Thee that, all our weaknesses notwithstanding, Thou art able to make us endure unto the end. And we plead for the gifts of Thy good Spirit to stay and steady us; and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw near to us in Thy love, and help us never to wander away from Thee, nor be forgetful of Thee. Oh! that we may ever be faithful to Him Who is so faithful to us, and that Jesus Christ, Who cannot deny Himself, may never be denied, either in word or life, by any of us.

We thank Thee for all the grace which Thou art ready to bestow upon them that come empty and desiring. Lord! reveal to us our true, deep need, and quicken in us true, earnest longing for the fulness of Thy Spirit, and all the great gifts which Thy Spirit brings with it. Strengthen us, day by day, to purge

ourselves from all the evils that draw us away from Thee, that we may be meet for the Master's use. Surely there can be no higher dignity and blessing than that Jesus Christ should use even us for His service, and to carry out His purposes; and we pray that there may be nothing in us that shall hinder that. May we be of 'the vessels that are unto honour,' and that are sanctified, and have a place in the great house, and are meet for the Master's own lips.

We pray Thee to forget all the imperfections of the past, and all the coldness and the wandering of the present, and to strengthen us for the time to come; and whether it be longer or shorter, and of whatever kind the days that still await us, may we fill them full of Thy service, and find in them Thy peace and presence. Do Thou cleanse our hearts from all their clinging earthliness. Deliver us from anything in our daily lives which may hinder our full surrender to Thee. Take out of our hearts, O Lord! all false and foolish affections, and fix and knit us to Thyself. Grant that the sweetness of Thy felt love, and the peace that comes from communion with Thee may to us be more desirable and more precious than gold; yea! than much fine gold; and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.

We thank Thee for all Thy blessings to us day by day; do Thou be near us in our various occupations, professions, trades, and duties. Whatsoever we do may we do it heartily, and do nothing which we cannot do as unto the Lord. Guide us by Thy counsel if any perplexity of conduct or belief be bewildering us. 'Lead us in a plain path because of observers.' Help us to walk with assured steps because we desire only to know Thy will, and then to run in the way of Thy

commandments. Bless each of us according to our different necessities. We commend to Thee all that are in sorrow or trouble, all from whom Thou art taking away dear ones, and beseech Thee that all sad and lonely hearts may be comforted and companioned by Thyself, and that all Thy people, in the various exercises of Thy providence, may profit thereby; and being exercised by them, as Thou wouldst have them be, may afterwards reap the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

O Lord! regard us as we are gathered here before Thee this evening. Give us more light to shine upon Thy truth, upon Thy gracious promises, and upon our own duties. Let the word that we may speak be Thy word. Do Thou Thyself breathe it into the heart and lips of the speaker, and into the minds and the wills of the hearers. Bless all the members of this congregation, present or absent. Be near to all Thy people, O Lord! Pour out upon this church much of Thy Spirit. Grant that the members thereof may shine as lights in the world, and that their witness for Jesus Christ may be clear and powerful because it comes not only from earnest lips but from holy lives. Take us into Thy care now; we thank Thee for all the benefits of Thy grace; the promises of Thy faithfulness. Be near us to help, to bless, and to keep us; granting us the forgiveness of all our evil, and strengthening us for better service in days to come; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LIX

O Lord! our gracious God, Who hearest us when we cry to Thee, and teachest us how to cry, we would

draw near to Thee now, through these outward services, and pray that anything around us or in us which may keep us back from true fellowship with Thyself may be taken away, and rendered powerless. Shed Thy blessing upon us now, O Lord! Thou seest all our hearts; Thou knowest all our histories, hopes, and needs. We often ask foolishly; help us to desire most earnestly the truest and the lasting good. And may our meeting this evening, however unworthy hearers and speaker may be, receive Thy blessing, which shall make our gathering together for the better, and not for the worse.

Draw near to us, and help us in this hour of worship; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LX

O Lord! Thy love has laid hold of us when we knew it not. May we be ignorant of it no longer, but ever realise Thine endless mercies, and feel that in Thy great ocean of love we live and move and have our being. We come to Thee, O Lord! unworthy and yet trustful, in some measure knowing our necessities and faintly realising Thy fulness. Stir up our desires that we may more and more long for, with that longing which has no pain in it, the fulness of Thy grace; and longing may possess, and possessing may desire yet more.

We thank Thee, O Father! for all the childlike confidence with which we can draw near to Thee. We are sure of Thy heart, however little we may be sure of our own. Help us to think rather of Thy faithfulness than of our faith, and to lose all the bitter remembrances of our own demerits and deficiencies, in the large and happy thought of Thy changeless loving-

kindness and of Thine infinite sufficiency. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst strengthen each of us, day by day, for the discharge of the recurring duties of life, the small ones that make up almost our whole history, and the great ones that come thinly sown through our lives. We pray that by patient continuance in well-doing, and faithfulness in that which is least, we may be prepared for any great trials, temptations, or opportunities which may present themselves in our lives. And we ask Thee that at all times we may live in close dependence upon Thyself, and in close observance of all which Thou dost reveal to us of Thy holy will. Keep us from our own weaknesses, from our own errors, from our own sins. Deliver us from the dominion of our own evil, and implant within us more and more of Thy good.

We pray for one another, in all the diversity of condition and character represented here now; and we beseech Thee that each of us, in our several paths in life, may have Jesus Christ for our Leader and Companion, and may follow His footsteps bravely and wholly. O Lord! especially we would desire to commend to Thee the young in this congregation. For those of them who may be here far from friends and early associations; for those of them who, in their places of business or of study, may be surrounded by temptations, and apt to fall away into forbidden paths—we pray that Thou wouldst draw near to all such. Be the Companion of the lonely, the young men or women who may be far from home and friends, and keep them from much transgression. We pray that Thou wouldst help them to consecrate the time of their youth to Thee, and in their early days to seek the Lord while He may be found.

And we ask Thee that Thou wouldst send upon our meeting this evening Thy rich blessing, and help us in speaking Thy word and in hearing Thy truth. Grant, O Lord! that in whatever else we may succeed or fail, in setting forth Thy message, the word of the Lord, in His great love and mighty salvation, may not fail to be worthily set forth by us. O Lord! Thou knowest our weaknesses and our unfitness. We would cast ourselves on Thy gracious promises, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst Thyself take the task of speaking here, and speak to every heart. Lord! grant that many souls may be gathered into the fold of Jesus Christ.

We pray for those in sorrow or trouble. Comfort all sad hearts, O Lord! and be the Companion of all lonely spirits, and the Guide of such as are in perplexity; and the Leader of all who doubt or fear. If any of us are bearing unusually heavy burdens of responsibility or sorrow, we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst manifest Thyself as the God Who daily bears our burdens; and help us all, however exercised we may be, to cast our burdens upon the Lord, and find therein the peace that passes understanding.

We pray for all Christian communities, for all the various congregations with which we may respectively be connected; for all good people who are trying to make the world better; for all who are preaching Jesus Christ in any fashion, in any land, to any audience. We ask Thee that Thou wouldst lead back the wanderers to Thyself. Gather all mankind beneath the shadow of the great Rock in the weary land. Bring all men to sit clothed and in their right mind at the feet of the Deliverer. Hear us in our prayers, we beseech Thee; forgive our many sins. Grant us Thy

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gracious presence, and help us in this hour of worship, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

LXI

O LORD! our gracious God and unchanging Friend, we thank Thee that though our ways are not as Thy ways, nor our thoughts as Thine, yet Thou art near us to love us, and Thy thoughts are higher and more gracious than ours, and though our ways are rebellious and perverse, all the paths of the Lord are loving-kindness and truth even to us. We would come to Thee, then, with thankful hearts and trustful ones, even in the midst of our consciousness of discord between our wills and Thine, and of our unworthiness. Blessed be Thy Name! we have not to make out in ourselves a plea with Thee. We cast ourselves on Thy deep heart of love, revealed to us dimly by all Thy dealings, and with sunshine clearness, in Christ Jesus. And we pray that Thou wouldst ever help us, in the midst of the clearest sight of our own imperfections, and divergence from Thy commandments, to trust wholly in Thyself as manifested to us in the Son of Thy love, in Whom Thou art well pleased even with us. We pray Thee to help us this morning, then, to draw near to Thee, with dispositions in which self-distrust and utter confidence in Thee peacefully blend. May we lift all our hearts and all our thoughts to Thee, and rise above whatever detains us on this low earth. Help us to aspire, help us to trust, help us to open our spirits by desire and confidence, and to receive into them the whole fulness of God. Thou hast taught us to open our mouths wide by desire and confidence, and hast encouraged us to expect great and wonderful things

from Thee. May we, in our petitions, not fall beneath Thy promises, nor thwart and hinder Thy purposes of bestowment by our carelessness and indifference. O Lord! give us, we pray Thee, Thyself to dwell in our hearts. May we find Thee the strength of our hearts, and make Thee our Portion for ever. Let nothing draw us away from our supreme affection towards Thee, and our lowly submission to Thee. Into all our spirits, O Lord! do Thou come, stooping to the narrow doorway of entrance, and dwelling in that contracted place; and making our hearts temples meet for Thee by Thine own indwelling. Cleanse out, we pray Thee, all the pollutions that we have stored in what should have been the abode of Thy holiness. Purge us from all our sins, from all our folly, from all our misplaced affections and desires. Hallow and lift our aims to Thyself, and grant us the wisdom and the grace in all the variety of our earthly engagements, to desire this one thing, that we may dwell in the House of the Lord for ever, and the Lord for ever dwell in the narrow room of our hearts.

We pray Thee to draw near to us, to shed abroad upon every soul the Spirit of grace and of supplication, that our petitions and our worship, inspired by Thee, may be accepted of Thee, and that asking the things that are in accordance with Thy will, there may come the fruits of Thine abundant answer in the calm assurance of knowledge that we have the things that we desire of Thee.

O Lord! deliver us from mistaken wishes, from eager efforts after doubtful good, from satisfying ourselves with anything short of the durable riches of righteousness. And help us in this hour, from whatever circumstances we have come, and with whatsoever

anxieties, or sorrows, or cares gnawing our hearts, to enter now into the secret place of the Most High, and to share in the eternal blessedness that glows with light in the darkness there. Hear us, we pray; grant us Thy blessing in our service, forgive all our many sins, and make us less unworthy of such gifts as, because Thou hast promised, we desire. All we ask is through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

LXII

O Lord, our God! help us, we beseech Thee, to hear when we hear, and to take to ourselves what belongs to each of us in the message of the ascended Christ to all His Churches. Do Thou reveal to us, and make us willing for the revelation, our own real condition as in Thy sight, that we may not be building on fancies of our own which have no reality in Thine eyes. Search us, O Lord! and try us; see us and know our thoughts and discover to ourselves any wicked ways that are in us, and lead us into the way that is everlasting.

O Lord! we thank Thee for that Spirit of the Lord which searcheth the hearts and the reins of the children of men; and we pray that we may come to the light that our deeds may be made manifest to ourselves.

We cast ourselves, O Lord! on Thy gracious promises, and knowing ourselves in some degree to be blind and naked, we would draw near to buy, without money and without price, the gold tried in the fire, and the white raiment which Christ gives. Help us, we pray Thee, now to worship before Thee with lowly, waiting, expectant hearts, to receive from Thyself such quickening as we may need, such strengthening of all that is good, and weakening of all that is evil in us, that we

may hereafter run, with more patience and triumph, the race that is set before us.

O Lord! we pray for one another; we thank Thee that our love can help our dear ones by bringing them in our supplications to Thy throne. And we pray for all who are dear to us; and for all those who may, in any special manner, need Thy consoling, directing, or quickening Spirit. Do Thou comfort sad hearts; do Thou speak Thy peace to all troubled ones; do Thou draw near to all Thy servants who are exercised by any kind of sorrow. And grant that, being rightly exercised thereby and accepting the sorrow which Thou dost send, it may in each of us, and in all our troubles, work the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

We pray Thee to be in all sick-chambers, with those who suffer and those who attend them, and to give to each, according to their necessities, the patience and the power that come from them.

O Lord! bless all good people who to-day are trying to help their fellows, and to draw men's hearts to Jesus Christ; and bless all the ministers of Thy word, whether officially or not. Wherever there are good Christian souls seeking the salvation of men, let the consciousness of Thy presence be with Thy servants. And may they see Thy word prospering in the thing whereto Thou hast sent it.

We commit ourselves to Thy care. We need Thy help, O Lord! Give it to each of us now, in our hour of worship, whether we hear or try to speak; and grant that all of us may feel that God Himself is drawing near to us, and is whispering His will and His love, whether it rebuke or chasten, into our own hearts. May we none of us be disobedient to the heavenly vision, but all say, 'Speak, Lord! for Thy servant heareth.' We

beseech Thee to accept our prayer, to forgive our sins, and to grant us grace for what remains of worship together, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

LXIII

O LORD, our God! we would come, weak and nigh to nothing, and pray Thee to help us that we may know Thee and ourselves; and with open hearts may receive Thee as our true treasure, and be clothed in the fine linen clean and white, and walk with Christ here with undefiled garments. Hear us and bless us, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

LXIV

O LORD! we thank Thee that we have learned to know Thee as the God full of compassion and gracious long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. For all Thy faithfulness, for all Thy loving-kindness, for all Thy forbearance with our wanderings and waywardness, for that Divine and perfect love which is not easily provoked nor soon angry, we desire to bless Thee. And we would come to Thee now, with the peaceful confidence and firm faith which all Thy revelation of Thyself to us warrants us in exercising, and which we put Thee to shame if we do not exercise. Help us to lay firm though reverent hands on the horns of the altar, and to cleave to Thee with all our hearts, undismayed by our consciousness of evil, and unrepelled by our sins, and by the difference between us and Thee. Alas! our ways have not been as Thy ways. Thy thoughts to usward are mercy and truth, and higher than our thoughts, higher that they may

shower down blessings upon us and stretch above us, gracious and life-giving as the heavens.

We beseech Thee, O Lord! to lift us up above all our own weaknesses, our own sorrows, trials, sins, and to bring us into Thine own presence, where there are fulness of joys and pleasures for evermore. And since even here on earth, amidst our shadowed and mingled careers, Thou dost deign to give some fruits and droppings of that full joy, and some gleams of those unchanging, unpassing delights, may we to-day find that it is no vain thing to draw near to Thee, but that even into our hearts and our lives there may come the earnest of the inheritance, and the beginnings of Thy great gifts.

We thank Thee that Thou dost draw near to us all, in Jesus Christ our Saviour, in Whom may we draw near to Thee, having access with confidence by that living Way; and though far-off being brought nigh by the blood of Christ, so as to be no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints above, and members of the very family of God.

O Lord! shed abroad in our hearts, according to our diverse necessities and present condition, the appropriate and punctual gifts of Thy grace. And may we all feel that we have a share in Thy fulness, and that we are living the lives which we live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God.

We bring to Thee our weaknesses and our sins. Strengthen the one, and cleanse away the other. We bring Thee our needs and our wishes; and we pray Thee to supply the needs and answer the wishes, in the measure in which they may conform to our highest good; that is, to Thy supreme will. We bring to Thee all our cares and sorrows and troubles, and ask Thee

that Thou wouldst minister to each of us 'the matter of the day in its day.' Give to us now that which now our circumstances and characters most require. We pray Thee to hear us, to forgive all our sins, and to grant us Thy gracious help and presence; for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

LXV

O Lord, our God! help us all, we pray Thee, that we may indeed come to Him Who has come to seek us in the wilderness, and cometh again to be our Judge. Help us, that, turning away from the cisterns that will be broken—and which never, broken or whole, can yield us the Water of Life—we may turn to the springing fountain and there drink, and thence live for ever.

O Lord! lay upon our hearts, we beseech Thee, all Thy merciful warnings and invitations; and may we neither despise the one nor neglect the other, but yield ourselves to the drawings of Thy grace and to the sweet compulsions of Thy love in Jesus Christ; and so be brought into daily fellowship with Thee, and live lords of ourselves, ready for our work, prepared for all Thy perfect will, and masters of all circumstances and events. Strengthen us, we beseech Thee, for Thy service. Help us to accept Thy providences, to yield ourselves to Thy loving will, and to get all the good which Thou dost mean us to get out of all the variety of Thy dealings with us. Regard each of us here in Thy presence according to our different necessities to-day. We commend one another to Thy care, and beseech Thee that as our day so our strength may be. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw

near to all sad, wounded, and lonely hearts, and that Thou wouldst reveal Thyself as the Life that triumphs over death, and the Friend Who makes all empty places full to all those who may be bearing the burden of great sorrow, and feeling that their paths on earth are henceforth lonelier than they ever were before.

We ask Thee that Thou wouldst give all Thy servants grace to bear the various dispensations of Thy loving hand, and that in and from all these diverse and changing circumstances we may hear the great voice that says to us, 'Come up higher!' We pray Thee to help us to set our affections on the things that are above where Christ is, and with Christ many whom He loves, sitting at the right hand of God. O Lord! give us Thy blessing in our worship now. Guide our thoughts and our words. Help us to hear, and to profit by the message of Thy grace; and to lay to heart, and live upon, and live by, the great truths of Thy word. And do Thou take away from hearers and speaker alike all unfitness for this service. Make it indeed an hour in which we worship, and hear what God the Lord will speak, and listen not in vain for His voice. Accept us now; grant us Thy presence as we bow before Thee; forgive all our many sins; and answer our poor prayer, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LXVI

Help us, O our God! we beseech Thee. Teach our hands to war and our fingers to fight. Give us grace to hold fast the life which is in Jesus Christ, and living by Him the lives which we live in the flesh, may we

be made capable by the discipline of earth's sorrows, of that rest and fuller life, which remaineth for the people of God.

LXVII

THANKFULLY and gladly, O Lord! would we come to Thee now, drawn by Thy great love, which is the brightness of Thy glory, and rejoicing that even to our feeble feet there is a way opened into Thy presence. We bring our darkness into Thy light, to illuminate and dispel our darkness. We would cling to Thy strength to be invigorated and restored, and with all our imperfections and sins upon our heads we draw near to our loving Father, and pray that we may be delivered from the burden and sting, from the power and tyranny, of every evil. Cleanse our hearts, O Lord! by the flowing into them of Thine own purifying love; and may the life of Jesus Christ within us make us free from the law in our members, of sin and death. We come with humble thanksgiving for all Thy great and wonderful gifts; for the providential mercies, diverse to each of us, according to our circumstances and characters, and for that one great grace, the same to us all, and capable of infinite diversity according to our necessities. We thank Thee for Thine unspeakable Gift which carries in itself the pledge and the promise of all other gifts; and we beseech Thee that each of us here now may find in Christ Jesus wisdom and righteousness, and hallowing, and redemption, and that for each of us that one great Storehouse may be opened that we may take from its all-sufficient supplies the things that are necessary for us, as well for the body as for the soul.

We come to Thee, O Lord! recognising, in some feeble measure, at once our dependence upon Thee, and our poverty and misery without Thee, and Thy fulness and infinite loving desire to impart Thy whole self to us. We pray that we may not receive the grace of God in vain, nor close our hearts against any of the sweet and mighty influences which Thou dost impart. Thou knowest all our necessities better than we do. May we know them well enough to know that God alone can supply them, and may that knowledge work in us a constant waiting upon Thee, the continual union of heart and mind with Thee, the patient submission to Thee, and the earnest desire after Thee which can never be in vain. May each of us belong to that blessed company whose hunger and thirst are most for the best things; and who, seeking after righteousness, will certainly have their desires fulfilled. Clothe us, we beseech Thee, with all the beauty of holiness which Thou dost desire, and Thou only canst impart. Make our characters what Thou wouldst have them to be, and bring us into continual and blessed fellowship with Thyself, that we may receive all Thy grace, and even as Thou hast daily to teach us to venture to hope, may be filled with all the fulness of God. O Lord, bestow upon us Thyself. We need nothing less; we need nothing more. Be Thou the life of our lives, the strength of our hearts, and our portion for ever. And help us, we pray Thee, day by day, in the variety of duty and circumstances, guiding us ever by Thy counsel, and making us willing to be so guided; hushing all the babble of our own foolish desires, and giving us to hear, in the silence of our souls, Thy voice, our Counsellor.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be with us in

our worship at this time; prepare our hearts to seek Thy face; and when we say 'Thy face, Lord! will we seek,' 'hide not Thy face far from us.' We thank Thee for all Thy past blessings to us, for all the mercies that perish with the using, for the greater gift that grows with use, and is never so great as to those who have most deeply enjoyed it.

And now let the consciousness of Thy gracious presence enter into, and bring peace to every heart; for all that we ask is through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

LXVIII

O LORD, our gracious Father! Who knowest all our needs, and hast thoughts of good and not of evil towards each of us, help us more and more to cling to Thee, and to set our faith and hope in God. May we, day by day, have a deeper consciousness of our union with Thee, and be able more and more to carry that calming, strengthening, blessed thought into all the duties and distractions of our fleeting times. We bless Thee that we have access to the secret place of the Most High, and we pray that our devout thoughts and feelings may not only be gathered together as now, when we are worshipping Thee, but may go with us through all our duties, and be as brooks by the way, on the dusty paths of daily life, wherefrom we may drink, neglecting no task in the meantime, and be refreshed.

We beseech Thee to draw near to us. We bring many weaknesses, some of us troubles, some sorrows, some wounds, some perplexities. Whatever may be busy in our hearts, O Lord! whether sorrow or joy, whether disappointed or fulfilled hopes, whether bright

or dark days may seem to lie before us, we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to worship towards Thy holy Temple, and that from out of the Sanctuary there may come, to our waiting and worshipping hearts, the strength and the special gifts that we need. May each of us receive from Thee, and know that we receive, a message suited to our present condition, as well as to our eternal and permanent wants; and may none of us turn away from the Voice that speaks to us from heaven, even though it speaks through a brother's lips. Let our words this morning be Thy words, O Lord! and do Thou seal them as Thou only canst upon all our hearts.

We pray for one another. We pray for Thy guidance for us all; especially we beseech Thee to comfort all sad hearts and to draw near to troubled ones, breathing Thy peace upon such. We pray for all that are in any way afflicted in mind, body, or estate, and ask Thee to be very gracious to them; that none may turn away from the solace of God, nor turn fainting from His rebuke.

Bless all communities of men who love God, who are seeking towards the right, and feeling after Thee if haply they may find Thee; and all who are negligent of Thee and rebellious against Thee, do Thou bend and bow their wills and bring them to the peace of submission. Prosper Thy word preached this day, here and everywhere. Let Thy Kingdom come in men's hearts, and may the Temple of the Lord be builded amidst the ruins of the idol shrines.

We beseech Thee to take us all into Thy care now, O Lord! let Thy mercy rest upon us, and Thy grace be precious to us; and do Thou speak through us and in us now, for Christ our Saviour's sake.

LXIX

O LORD! our heavenly Father, Thou waitest to be gracious, and art ever manifesting Thyself to us. Help us, we beseech Thee, that we may have open ears and the clear-sighted eye which shall hear Thy voice and behold Thy presence in all the places where Thou dost reveal Thyself to us. We have often lost what Thou didst mean us to have, the tokens of Thy presence, and the revelation of Thy will; and our own negligence has robbed us of the blessed consciousness that Thou art near us. But we come to Thee blind, and ask Thee not only to deliver our eyes from tears, but to take away from them all the obscurations and scales which come between us and the sight of Thee. We pray Thee to help us day by day to walk in the light of Thy countenance, and ever to hear the joyful sound of Thy Name. Fill us, we pray Thee, increasingly with Thine own Spirit which recognises the traces of Thy footsteps. Draw us near to Thyself by the sweet constraint of Thy love. Unveil Thy Face, and turn our faces to the incorruptible and undying life; and grant, O Lord! that walking in that light in which Thou art we may see light, whatsoever be the darkness that lies around us.

O Lord! our gracious Father, we come to Thee this morning with thankfulness. Thou hast indeed loosed our bonds. May we be Thy servants. Thou givest us the cup of salvation; may we not turn away from it, nor neglect to take it and drink. Thou hast delivered our feet from falling. May we walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

We bless Thee for all the mercies which Thou hast scattered upon our path. Thou hast inclined Thine ear unto us. We would call upon Thee as long as we live.

Thou hast heard the voice of our supplications. We would love Thee ever. Accept our praise; help us deeply to feel how wise, how loving, how gracious and constant have been Thy mercies towards us. And may the great and good gifts which perish with the using lead us to firmer possession of the greatest and best gift, which grows by use.

O Lord! look upon us gathered here. We come with every-varying circumstances—some of us perhaps from sad homes—to seek the one Consolation and Refuge. Thy face, Lord, will we seek. Hide not Thy face far from us. Accept us as we draw near to Thee now; be merciful to us, and reveal Thyself to us in this hour of worship. Let Thy strong hand hold us up, and the fire of the live coal from off the altar touch our lips and hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXX

O Lord, our God! we know that there is nothing which Thou hast not given, and no place where Thou hast not trod. Thou givest first before Thou askest; Thou givest what Thou commandest if we will only take it. May we each feel, whether our gifts be greater or less, that the stewardship intrusted to us is of Thee; and may we use faculties, opportunities, possessions, as Thou wouldst have us to use them—for Thy sole glory, and for our own advancement. May we be faithful unto death, and do Thou help us, in all the small as in all the great things of our daily lives, to remember that we are not our own, and that all which we call such is Thine. Pour out of Thy good Spirit upon this congregation; may Thy grace come to all our hearts. Help us in speaking; help us in hearing. May this not

be a mere meeting of men to listen to a man, but the gathering together of God's children to listen to God's voice. And do Thou Thyself, O Lord! speak even through us, and with whatsoever necessary imperfections and weaknesses, errors or misconceptions, Thy word may be spoken, free it from the spots which we may attach to it. Deliver it from the weakness which it receives in passing through human mediums, and grant that the word of the Lord may manifest itself in all our hearts; and the good seed be sown, through whatever chaff may be mingled with it. May it spring up unto eternal life.

We pray that Thou wouldst be near us in all our daily life. Help us to adorn the teaching in all things, and grant to us Thy presence in all our changing circumstances, that we may so pass through the things temporal as to obtain a firmer possession for the present, and a brighter hope for the future of complete possession of the things that are eternal.

Bless, we pray Thee, any among us who are in any kind of difficulty, or trouble, or sorrow. O Lord, we thank Thee for these consolations which are great and manifold, sufficient for the sorest wounds, and at hand for every care. We pray that any of us who may specially need such may receive and treasure them, and profit by them. O Lord, bless us, and all whom we love, and all whom we would remember at Thy Throne. Draw near to all Thy servants, and strengthen all Thy people in their hold of Jesus Christ the Captain of their salvation. May they and we be as the flock that follows the Shepherd whithersoever He goeth. Accept us now, we beseech Thee; give us Thy presence in our worship, forgive our sin and quicken us by this service, through Jesus Christ the Life.

LXXI

O LORD, our God! may it be true of each of us that we love Thee, O Lord, our Strength! And because Thou hast inclined Thine ear unto us, may we call upon Thee as long as we live. We thank Thee for all the drawings of Thy great mercy, for the light of Thy love that shines from Thy face to attract us to Thyself. We thank Thee that Thou hast swayed us with patient, long-suffering forgiveness; with continually repeated mercy; by many voices in Thy providences to us; by many monitions in our own hearts and consciences; and most of all by Thy dear Son, trusting in Whom we see Thy heart, and in Whose outstretched hand we recognise Thine.

We beseech Thee, O Lord! that all this wealth of divine forbearance and wondrous treasure of God's goodness may not be flung away on us, or by us. Help us to yield ourselves to Thee, and do Thou fulfil the promises which Thou hast made and hast never yet broken, that Thou wilt keep them in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on Thee. We thank Thee for that strong City which Thou hast prepared for us, with Thy divine and unchangeable purpose of salvation for its very walls and bulwarks. And we pray that all of us gathered here now may pass within the gate into the City, and there abide for ever saved, and companioned by Thy friends, and guarded by Thyself.

O Lord! forgive, we pray Thee, all our weaknesses and errors and sins. Help us to bring the whole heap of them unto Thee, for Thou only canst deal with them; and it is Thy prerogative; and, blessed be Thy Name! Thy delight, to cleanse and forgive iniquity and

transgression and sin. O Lord! purge us throughly from our iniquity, and wash us from all our stains. Help us to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord in heart, to love Thee supremely and all things in Thee, in will never to rebel against or murmur at any of Thy commandments or Thy providences, and in all our thoughts and purposes to walk with Thee in unbroken continuance of peaceful communion.

Strengthen us, we pray Thee, thereby, for all diligence, in every duty, however manifold, and, as men think secular, our avocations may be. May we be able to do them all as service to our Father in Heaven; and strip us, we pray Thee, of all false hopes and refuges, and withdraw us from all forbidden paths, and strengthen us to run in the way of Thy commandments, and with our whole hearts and minds to love the Lord our God.

Give us Thy blessing in our worship, for there is none other that can make it truly profitable but Thyself, O Lord! May our prayers be prayers indeed, taught us by Thy Divine Spirit and presented in humble confidence in Thy great intercession. May all our words and thoughts in this service be dictated by Thee, be fostered and prospered by Thine hand, and may the associations of this place, and of the customary prayers and worship of this hour, be helpful to us all. We bless Thee that whilst Thou art with the great congregation Thou art with the solitary souls that may be seeking after Thee; and we commend to Thee all such who may be absent from our communion this evening, and pray that Thou wouldst be with them.

Hear us now, O Lord, we beseech Thee, in our supplications; grant us Thy blessing as we wait before Thee, and accept our thanks, through Jesus Christ, for all Thy mercies.

LXXII

O Lord, our gracious Father! how wonderful Thy acts, how great Thy grace, how tender Thy heart, how long-suffering Thy charity, which is not easily provoked or soon angry, even with our repeated sins. We bless Thee for that mercy which is mightier than all men's rebellion, which was before we rebelled, which is extended toward us whilst we rebel, which seeks to draw us away from the folly of our disobedience, and to bring us into the blessedness of peaceful, joyful service to Thee.

We thank Thee that Thou callest Thy servants Thy friends, and that Thou dost enter into loving relations of Fatherhood with us, even with us. And we beseech Thee that all which Thou art ever revealing to us of Thy goodness and tender care may win us back to Thyself, and that bound by the cords of love and the bands of a man, even Jesus Christ, we may yield ourselves living sacrifices, and in all that we do render ourselves up unto Thee. To this end, O Lord! bless, we beseech Thee, our gathering together now, and any words which Thy grace may give to us to speak. Let the message of Thy love be very clear and very persuasive. Let Thy truth magnify itself, and attest its origin by its suitableness to us all, and its power in our own hearts. Do Thou bow and incline us all to hear what God the Lord shall speak; and take away any hindrances to recognising Thy voice which may arise from the human medium through which it comes, or from any faults on our own parts. Give the hearing ear; touch the lips with the live coal from the altar; and may Thy word be glorified and have free course in all our hearts and minds now. We commend one

another to Thy gracious care, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst listen to the many prayers that have gone up this day from Thy gathered children, and from solitary souls, and wouldst answer these with the abundance of the Divine gifts of wisdom and righteousness and peace, and power to do Thy holy will.

Take us now into Thy care, we beseech Thee, forgive all our sins, be with each of us in our daily life and conflict. If any of us have special burdens to carry, may we have special strength given to us; and whatever be the texture of Thy present providences towards us, may we be able to recognise Thy hand, for surely Thou dwellest in the thick darkness as well as in the brightest light. We pray Thee to hear us now, to accept and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

LXXIII

O Lord, our gracious Father! Who art ever near us to bless us, we thank Thee that in all our weakness we can come to Thy strength; and that when our hearts are cold, and our desires faint, Thou wilt quicken us if we wait before Thee. Breathe, we beseech Thee, upon all our hearts, and give the Spirit by which we pray, that our prayers may be prayers indeed, and acceptable unto Thee. Lift up our thoughts, O Lord! lift up our hearts. Quicken us, and we will call upon Thy Name; draw us and we will run after Thee.

We thank Thee for all the reasons that we have for glad coming into Thy presence, and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst take away from us now any poor excuses which we may have for slackness in approach to Thee, or for wandering of thought and deadness of desire.

May neither sorrows nor joys, neither duties nor sins, neither work nor pleasures, keep us away from Thee. May the world lose its hold upon each of us now, and the things that are unseen and eternal assert their reality, their power, their supremacy.

O Lord! we come to Thee with many burdens, some of them of our own making, some of them of Thy laying upon our shoulders. And we pray Thee that we may have strength given to us to cast all our burdens on the Lord, and to feel them the lighter because we do. Thou seest how slow we are to respond to Thy calls, how negligent in doing Thy will, how faint and feeble our strongest and firmest resolutions. But we cast ourselves upon Thee, O Lord! and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us with full purpose of heart to cleave to Thee, and more and more as we go through our daily lives to set the Lord always before us, that there may be less of a contrast between our Sundays and our week, and less of a fearful discord between the things that we say to Thee sometimes in our prayers, and the actions of our lives. Lord! knit us to Thyself, pour out upon us, we pray Thee, now, the consciousness of Thy love to us. May other things fade away by reason of the glory and the lustre that excelleth. And may we now realise what we profess always to believe, that Thou art our portion and our strength for ever. Cleanse our hearts, we pray Thee, from all that pollutes them and hinders our devotion to Thee. And grant us this morning the joy of Thy salvation and the liberty of Thy free Spirit. Uphold us therewith, and make us strong, that we may conquer all our worse selves, and, in full surrender of our whole lives to Thee, may change the worse into the better, and become men in Christ.

Give us a blessing from Thyself. Let our hearts be prepared for Thy word, and give Thy word to be our strength and our guide. May we all realise that Thou indeed dost come to meet us when we address ourselves to meet Thee; and may we not only have this as a matter of faith, but have it verified in to-day's experience. And now look upon us as we are gathered here; lift away all weights; set our souls free from all bonds; and may we mount up on wings as eagles, and rest in the secret place of the Most High. Hear us, we pray Thee, forgive and accept us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LXXIV

O LORD! help us, we beseech Thee, constrained by the love of Christ, to yield ourselves to Him, and being in Him, to become new creatures in Christ Jesus. Let the old things that have had dominion over us pass away, and may the blessed hopes and purposes and aims that belong to Thy children be more and more dominant in all our hearts and lives. Set us free, O Lord! from all the evil of our old selves; and grant that these affections and desires which we have put into subjection to fleeting things and perishable aims, may now be consecrated, ennobled, and thereby renewed by being devoted to our Lord and Master. Thus may we have more and more of that life which triumphs in the death of self, and is perfected in the life of glory. And give us day by day to live, not according to the old letter, but according to the new spirit. Look upon us, a company of dependent creatures; some of us recognising our dependence more than others, but all of us hanging upon Thee

for everything. And grant, we beseech Thee, to us, from out of Thy full stores, opened by Thy loving heart, and brought near to us in the Son of Thy love, all the treasures of wisdom, knowledge, strength, righteousness, blessedness, self-control, and self-sacrifice, which we need for our true life.

Help us, we pray Thee, in our daily work, to set the Lord always before us, and however familiar, commonplace, and trivial may be our habitual occupations, may we find ways in them of glorifying God and honouring the Master Whom we profess to serve. May we adorn the doctrine in all things; and may men, looking upon us, take knowledge of us, and understand whence we have derived that grace which shines in all our actions. Help Thy professing servants, O Lord! we beseech Thee, to live their profession, and from their conduct may there sound out the word of the Lord so that we need not to speak anything.

We beseech Thee to bless us each in our various occupations and present circumstances. Thou leadest us by diverse ways, but Thy purpose is to bring us all by the way that is right for us, to the City of habitation, where we may all dwell and rest. Whatever, then, may be Thy present dealings with us, bring us to understand their meaning, to accept them as good, to bow before Thee with submission. If any of us have special need for such grace may we have special grace given to us to meet our need. And whatever burdens or sorrows, cares or perplexities, intellectual or material, we may be carrying now, grant, O Lord! the needful grace; and help us to believe that all which meets us is full of blessing, and so to accept it and deal with it, as that we may not miss the blessings which are stored for us in all Thy ways with us. We beseech

Thee that even when the roll which Thou dost give to us to eat is bitter to the taste it may afterwards be as honey for sweetness. May that be true about us in regard to unwelcome duties, and toil, and aims beyond our strength, and sorrows, and losses, and loneliness which any of us may have to bear.

We pray for all Thy children, especially for any of Thy servants who may be on beds of sickness, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst raise them up again for renewed service to Thyself, and for service all the better because of their afflictions. We pray for all Thy Churches throughout the world, and ask Thee to be with all Thy professing servants, and make their profession a more conspicuous and a more glorious reality than it has been in the past. We pray Thee for our country, for the city in which we live, for all that are in authority, and beseech Thee that all may be done for Thy glory; and that more and more the kingdoms and the rulers of the earth may be the servants of the Most High God.

Now, Lord! we commit ourselves to Thy gracious care, and pray Thee to be with us in the remainder of this hour of worship, and for all our coming days. Hear us, we beseech Thee, in these our supplications, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LXXV

O Lord, our God! we would lift up our eyes and hearts to that calm land of joy and peace, where Thou art, and beseech Thee, that even whilst we here have foes to fight and work to do, and changes to front, we may dwell there and be at rest in God.

We thank Thee, O Lord! that our cries are not in

vain, when we ask for things so concordant with Thy will as that Thou wouldst cleanse and quiet our hearts, and fix their wanderings on Thyself, and breathe Thy strength into us, which brings peace in the midst of, and even by means of, our conflicts here.

We bless Thee for all the light and brightness which Thou dost shed upon our paths; and we pray that Thou wouldst, in accordance with Thine own gracious promises, fill us, Thy poor, with bread, and give us the things that are needful, seeing that our emptiness depends upon Thee, and recognises itself. O Lord! purge our hearts, we pray Thee, from our true enemies, desires wandering away from Thee, and knit us closer to Thyself, that in all things, however diverse may be our circumstances, and different and pressing our duties, we may be able to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our lives; and whatsoever we do, to do it as unto the Lord, and so with all our hearts.

We thank Thee for all Thy mercies to us. We would not forget the least of all Thy benefits, nor ever so find sweetness in them as to have no leisure to remember the Hand from which they come. But may we more fully connect Thy gracious purposes with everything that befalls us, and we may more entirely yield ourselves to Thee, in the happy confidence that whatsoever comes is full of blessing for us, and that it is our fault if we do not find the sweetness stored in it.

O Lord! give us Thy presence in our worship to-day; sustain with Thy right hand that we may follow hard after Thee, and do Thou help us to cherish until, and after, they are satisfied, the desires which Thou wilt fulfil to them that fear Thee. We bless Thee for all

Thy past mercies; we cast ourselves on Thy gracious care. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to be free from anxieties, knowing that God careth for us, and not to take the superfluous task of looking after ourselves in such a fashion as to forget that Thou, with Thy wisdom, dost look after us all.

We pray Thee to bless each of us in our several circumstances, and to help us day by day. As we travel along life's common road, may it be in cheerful godliness; may it be in quiet faith; may our souls dwell with Thee apart, and yet lay humble duties upon ourselves. And now grant us Thy gracious presence, and that sweet, silent, inward teaching that Thou dost always give to hearts that wait. May we wait, and then we shall not go away empty, for Thou hast supplied all our fulness from the infinite storehouse which Thou hast laid up for us in Christ Jesus; in Whom we ask, and through Whom we are confident that we shall receive all our petitions.

LXXVI

O Lord! we thank Thee that Thy children, who love and trust Thee, can dwell with the everlasting burnings, and enter into the fire of God without fear. We beseech Thee that Thy mighty Spirit, the Spirit of burning, may purge away from us all that is foul for the fire, and may make us clear and clean, as it is. Help us day by day to serve Thee acceptably with all reverence, which has in it love, that love, which never is parted from godly and blessed fear. Lead us nearer to all those great things and Persons which are beyond this narrow realm where we abide to-day. We pray that truly each of us may

come unto the City of the living God, and to God the Judge of all, and to the blood of sprinkling; and we ask Thee to help us day by day to live as those who seek for the City which hath the foundations. Help us, O Lord! individually and unitedly in this hour of service and meditation. Guide us when we try to speak in Thy Name, deliver us from error, from wickedness, from anything that may hinder Thy words from entering into any heart; and do Thou graciously take our poor words into Thy care and by Thy Spirit's presence in them make them rich to many a witnessing and assenting conscience. And do Thou lead us all, we pray Thee, in paths of righteousness in our daily lives; and grant that the profit of these our Sunday services may appear in our week-day work. We would commend one another to Thy loving care, with thankfulness for all Thy mercies to each and all. And we beseech Thee that we may be ever kept in humble, faithful hope and dependence upon Thee, and strenuously striving to work out in our lives the rich contents of the great salvation which Thou givest us in Christ Jesus.

O Lord! draw near to each of us in such guise as our wants require. If any of us are in any sorrow or trouble, be Thou very near, and very tender, with such. Thou dost not break the bruised reed. We pray that Thou wouldst bind up, and by Thy wondrous power make us strong through all weakness, and stronger by our sorrows. If any of us are groping after Thee if haply they may find Thee, and bewildered by intellectual or moral difficulties, be near to such. Thou dost not quench the smoking flax, but tends it till it breaks into a flame. Let our thoughts and wishes burn bright and clear, aspiring upwards to Thee.

We pray for all the weary, the sorrowful, the oppressed, for all in trouble of mind, body, or estate. We pray for the good of Thy whole Church, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw near to all Thy professing people, and that they may be more amenable to the touch of Thy Spirit, and more built up, in, and on their most holy faith.

We pray for our country and our Sovereign, and for all the nations of the earth in this time of perplexity and of duty. Do Thou break the rod of the oppressor, and scatter the people that delight in war, and bring the peaceable Kingdom of the Prince of Peace. Lord! hear us, give us Thy blessing in our service; send us help from Thy sanctuary, and light from Thy throne. We ask everything in the name of Jesus.

LXXVII

O Lord! Thou art not worshipped with men's hands, as though Thou needest anything, seeing Thou givest to all life and breath and all things. We would come to Thee bringing our needs to be supplied, and our emptiness to be filled, open, and, we trust, receptive hearts to be replenished from Thine infinite goodness. Help us, we beseech Thee, moved by the mercies of God, to yield ourselves to Thee, the perfect Love and Lover of our souls. We would render to Thee, O Lord! our praise, bring before Thee our thankful hearts, spread before Thee our great necessities, call upon Thee in our day of trouble, and offer Thee the tribute of our thankfulness. Let the lifting up of our hands be as the evening sacrifice. Let our prayer come before Thee as incense, and because we come empty-handed do Thou fill our uplifted palms with

needful gifts. O Lord! what is there that we do not need from Thee, and what is there that Thou art not willing to give us more abundantly than we can ask or think! Thou hast laid up all Thy treasures in Jesus Christ; Thou hast given us the key of the storehouse. May we not starve in the midst of abundance, nor remain wretched and poor, and in need of all things when all are waiting to be taken. Strengthen our faith, enlarge our desires, rectify and purify them that we may seek the best things most, first, most earnestly, last, and always. And, O Lord! forasmuch as Thou dost magnify Thyself when Thou dost give, may we magnify Thee by taking the cup of salvation, and giving thanks unto the name of the Lord. That is what Thou dost desire that we should render to Thee for all Thy benefits to us; and may we bring Thee what Thou dost desire, and present ourselves living sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing as we are gathered here now; we pray that Thy grace may be with each of us, according to our different dispositions and needs. O Lord! we bring Thee hearts tried in very diverse ways, and characters so different that nothing less than Thy infinite sufficiency could supply all the needs. But we thank Thee that whatever may be our present experience, whatever our weakness, whatever our want, there is enough in God—more than enough by far—to make us blessed and strong and wise. Give us, then, we pray Thee, Thyself; and inasmuch as we are all different, and yet, in the depths of our natures, all the same, give us that one self-same gift which will shape itself in each as each may need. O Lord! Thou art our Portion, the strength of our

hearts, and we pray that we may never stray away from Thee, nor seek to satisfy ourselves elsewhere than in Thee. Why should we painfully and vainly hew out for ourselves broken cisterns when the Fountain of Life is springing up by our sides? Help each one of us to lay a faithful hand upon Thy great promises, and to press near Thy fatherly heart. Forgive, we pray Thee, all our sins, our wanderings, our transgressions, and shortcomings, all our waywardness and folly. Redeem us from the power of these vanities that have ruled in our lives so long. And help us, in days that may yet remain to us, to live more soberly and righteously, because more godly, in this present world. We thank Thee for all Thy daily benefits; we bless Thee for all which this day brings to our memories of that great work of the Risen Saviour. And we beseech Thee that the Resurrection joy may dwell in our hearts, and that we too, even whilst we here on earth labour, and sometimes weep, may sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Look upon us now gathered in Thy presence; give us Thy gracious help and the manifold blessings which Thou hast in store for us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXVIII

O Lord! our merciful Father, we thank Thee, for Thou hast called us out of darkness into Thy marvellous light. We pray Thee for grace to walk in that light as Thou art in the light. Cleanse us from all participation in, or hankering after, the unfruitful works of darkness; and may we each make good in our lives our title to be the children of the day, and not of the

night nor of darkness. Help us, we pray Thee, that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God may indeed shine in our hearts, and brighten all our course. Help us that the light of Thy perfect holiness may, in some measure, illumine and irradiate our dark and lowly lives, and shine with reflected glory from us, in all that we do. Give us, we pray Thee, the light of Thy gladness, and grant that in that unsetting and unchanging brightness of joy we may live, whatsoever storms and tempests may stoop upon our paths.

We thank Thee that we are not left to walk in the light of the fires that we ourselves have kindled, else we should have to lie down in sorrow and in darkness, but that we may have the continual shining of Thy presence around us, and may have the sunshine of Thy love and grace ever abiding in our hearts. May it be so with each of us, O Lord! Thou knowest what each of us may have to bear, what each of us may have to mourn, what each of us may have to confess. But we thank Thee that Thou bearest the burdens of Thy patient children; that Thou dost come to comfort with Thine own gentle and strong consolations all them that mourn, and to appoint to them joy for gladness, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

We thank Thee that Thou hearest the unspoken confessions of penitent hearts, and that Thou art ready to cleanse away all the evil which they lament and loathe, but cannot strip themselves from, without Thy help. Draw near, then, in Thy strong grace to each of us, and grant, we pray Thee, that in the time to come our lives may be more manifestly light in the Lord than they have ever been in the past. We pray for Thy cleansing; we pray for Thy rebuke; we pray

for the dealings of Thy providence and of Thy grace which may purge us. Lord! Thy rod can comfort; help us never to shrink from it.

We come with humble petitions that Thou wouldst help us in this service. We pray for words to speak in accordance with Thy holy will, which may be strong with the strength that God puts into our feeble utterances when we depend upon His grace. And we ask Thee that all who hear Thy truth this day, here and elsewhere, may be led by it nearer to that Saviour in Whom is all that all of us need. O Lord! bless us in our worship; lift away from our hearts any impediments or hindrances. May the things unseen and eternal, which are often so dim and so much obscured by the nearer trivialities of the present, shine out in their solid reality and in their attractive power to us all. And grant that our worship to-day may tend, in some measure, to the confirming of our hearts in obedience and in faith, and to the lifting of our lives nearer to the pattern of our Master.

We pray Thee to bless, in like manner, all who may this day call upon the name of Jesus, their Lord and ours, and we thank Thee for the unity of the Spirit which knits Thy children together, and pray that that unity may be more realised and more manifest in the world.

O Lord! regard us as we are gathered before Thee now; graciously pour out of Thy good Spirit upon us; help us in our worship; speak in and to us all, and accept us as we come to Thee now, in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LXXIX

O Lord! Thou hast given us Thy heart ere Thou hast asked for ours; and we would come moved and melted by Thy great love, and yield ourselves to Thee in all-answering and taking love, which meets Thy giving love; and in lowly obedience which delights to do Thy will, and pray for grace to write Thy law within our hearts. We thank Thee, Father, for the many cords of love with which Thou dost draw us to Thyself, but most of all for the bands of a man in that wondrous becoming flesh of the Word for us and our salvation. We thank Thee that forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood He Himself likewise took part of the same, and we bless Thee for the victory won by Him over all our enemies, and that He, our living Lord, hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light in Himself.

We beseech Thee that this morning all our hearts may be drawn nearer to Thee Who hast in more wondrous fashion, than Thy servants of old dared to dream, delivered our souls from the power of the grave, and dost receive to Thyself all them that live and die in the faith and love of Jesus the Light. We bless Thee that now we can draw near to Thee with such peaceful hearts, assured of Thy tender regard, and dreading nothing from the ardours of Thy consuming fire. We pray that that fire may indeed melt away from us all our dross and evil, and may make us like Thyself, a flame of steadfast love, aspiring ever unto Thee.

O Lord! deliver us, we pray Thee, from all our own weaknesses, from all our faults of conduct and character, from all the sins which lurk in hidden places within us;

and make more plain to us, we beseech Thee, by the merciful convincing of the comforting Spirit, all our unrighteousness. May there be no secret sins in us, and may we be kept back, by Thy restraining grace, from all known evil and transgression of Thy holy will. Purge our hearts; confirm our faith; increase our love; by our wills make our hands swift to labour, and our feet prepared to run in the way of Thy commandments. And day by day may we set the Lord before us, and so be of those in whose glad ears the joyful sound is ever heard.

Bless us to-day, we beseech Thee, give us Thy gracious help without which nothing is wise or strong; without which our worship is but outward form, and our words and praises but as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. And help us, in all our approach to Thee, to leave behind and beneath us the world and its cares, and its sorrows and joys, its duties and its delights, except in so far as these may impel us nearer to Thyself.

We thank Thee for all Thy gracious promises, and that Thou comest to meet them that feebly and with faltering steps set out to meet Thee. We bless Thee for the swift over-answers to faint desires, for the large gifts put into slack hands, for the exceeding abundance, above all that we can ask or think, in which faith, howsoever feeble, ever rejoices. And we pray that our approach to Thee to-day may be thus believing, thus humble, thus expectant, and thus rewarded.

Hear our petitions, we beseech Thee, our sins forgive, and in Thy mercy receive and bless us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LXXX

ALMIGHTY GOD! Who knowest all our weakness and slothfulness, and how strong the bands and bonds of self and sin are, in their hold upon us, we come to Thee for freedom; we come to Thee for deliverance; we come to Thee to break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free. And we beseech Thee that the chains that bind us may drop from us, and we walk in the liberty of the sons of God.

O Lord! help us to lose ourselves in Thy love, and find ourselves when we have thus lost ourselves. We pray that Thou wouldst teach all of us professing Christians how solemn and real is the requirement that we should take up our cross daily and follow Jesus. Give us, we pray Thee, the wisdom to know what is the most precious of our possessions, even our own selves. And may we not be unfaithful stewards and prodigal children, wasting our substance, and casting away Thy richest gifts.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing to rest upon each of us in our daily life and struggle. Do Thou help us in all things to conform ourselves to what we have learnt of Thy gracious will concerning us, and never to fight against either Thy providence or Thy commandments. If there are any of us this morning who may find it specially hard to say, 'Not my will but Thine be done,' give, we pray Thee, special grace and help to such souls that in submission they may find peace; and ceasing to kick against the pricks, may cease to be wounded by Thee.

We pray for all sad and solitary hearts; for any whom Thou hast bereaved, for all homes into which Thy messenger Death has entered; and beseech Thee

that where Thou hast sent him Thou wouldst send the Angel of Life. And we pray that our minds and hearts may be brought into harmony with Thy gracious purposes; and that empty places in homes and hearts may be filled by God Himself. For all that are departed in Thy faith and fear we thank Thee, for lives spent in Thy service we praise Thee, and beseech Thee that we too may learn how blessed it is to live for God and not for ourselves.

Be with us in our worship this morning; guide our thoughts and words; carry Thy truth that may be in them to all our hearts and minds. May our wills bow to Thee, and we be ready to carry out in practice the commandments of our God. O Lord! take away weakness and unfitness; remove from us anything, and everything, that may interfere with our full fellowship with Thee now; and let Thy gracious message manifest its power to each of us.

We commend one another to Thy care; we pray for all good people, for all Thy children throughout the world, for those that, alas! understand not one another, and yet cling to the Lord of them all. We pray that we may all be brought closer together, and may understand each other better, because we live in closer communion with our common Lord. And now we commit ourselves to Thy gracious care, and beseech Thee to be with us in what remains of this morning's worship; and to love and bless and keep us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXXI

O Lord! truly Thou art good; and Thy mercy endureth for ever, and is not turned away by our sinful-

ness, but suffereth long and is kind, hopeth all things, even for the worst of us. We bless Thee that we can gather ourselves together in peaceful trust in Thy great mercy, undisturbed; yea! rather deepened when we think of our own sinfulness and unworthiness.

We come to Thee for refuge from ourselves. We know that we carry within us great and terrible possibilities of evil, and that these have not seldom forced themselves into action in our lives. But Thy mercy endureth for ever, and Thy love is older and stronger than all man's sin. Thou conquerest evil, because Thou lovest. Hast Thou not heaped coals of fire upon our heads, giving us food when hungry and drink when thirsty, and answering all our departures by mightier manifestations of Thy mercy?

We thank Thee for what Thou hast done, and art doing; and therefore, O Lord! we come to Thee in prayer with good hope and glad hearts, and cast ourselves upon Thy great promises, and pray that we may never thwart the fulfilment of these to ourselves. O Lord! cleanse us, we pray Thee, from all unworthy thoughts of Thee, and of the things which Thou doest with us and for us. Deliver us from every too lofty estimate of the worth of Thy fleeting gifts; and may these never come between us and Thee, neither absorbing our thoughts, nor staying our desires, nor tempting our confidence so as that we forget Thyself.

O Lord! give to us this morning worshipping hearts. Strengthen us that we may turn away from all earthly things, or that we may remember them only in such fashion as to make our prayers to Thee more earnest, our thankfulness deeper, and our trust fuller. Do Thou deliver us, we pray Thee, from our own weaknesses, many as these are. O Lord!

Thou knowest how we forget Thee; how we stray away sometimes in paths forbidden; and often, even whilst walking in the ways that Thou hast appointed, do depart from Thyself. We beseech Thee that all our wavering resolutions may be confirmed, and all our feeble desires strengthened; and that we may more and more learn the secret of dying to ourselves, that we may live, and because we live unto God in Christ do Thou cleanse our hearts from every evil affection. Do Thou deliver us from all errors of belief, from all mistakes in practice. Do Thou enlighten us, that in Thy light we may see light, and that the truth may make us free.

We pray Thee to bless us in our worship, to guide our thoughts, to keep us from all temptations incident even to such holy service as this, and to grant that the faith which may have been rudely shaken in the midst of the duties or delights of the past week may be confirmed and repaired, and that all our dying graces may be quickened and revived, and we this day behold more solid and clear the things which are unseen the realities which are with Thee. Open Thou the eyes of our hearts that we, purified there, may there behold God, and may behold God dwelling there. Forgive all our sin, accept of us as we come to Thee; answer our poor petitions, and give us Thy blessing and Thy strength, which are all that we need; through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

LXXXII

O Lord, our God! we thank Thee that even the thought that Thou art a consuming fire does not repel us from Thee. We bless Thee that there are

fires and fires. And we pray that we may be baptized in that fire which shall burn up all the wood and hay and stubble in us, and shall brighten and make to flash with its light all that is of Thee.

We would come to Thee with reverence and godly fear, humble trust, longing love, and bless Thee that we are coming unto the Judge of all, and pray that we may indeed dwell in that heavenly City, and be companions and fellow-citizens with the holy ones, and of the household of God. Lord! breathe upon us all Thy sweet and gracious Spirit, to calm and purge and strengthen our hearts, and make us ready for all Thy holy will, prompt to do, and patient to endure it.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless us each, according to our various work and wants. Be Thou near any of us that may have any specially heavy burdens to carry of responsibility or duty or trouble. We thank Thee that Thou hast taught us to think of Thee as the God that daily beareth our burdens. And we would cast them all upon Thyself. O Lord! deliver us from anxiety, and from the useless care of ourselves, knowing that Thou carest for us. May we take Thy holy providences of whatever kind they are. Comfort any sad hearts among us; be gracious to any that may have perplexities or difficulties in their daily lives, and whose paths may seem uncertain and black, by reason of Thy providences. Guide Thy people by the right way, and help us to be so docile of heart as that we shall understand Thy holy will, and to dwell so near Thee, looking for inspiration and direction to Thy face as that we shall be guided by Thine eye. O Lord! remember any absent from our communion this morning who may be in trouble or sickness. Be

Thou with all Thy feeble and suffering servants. Grant that as the body perisheth the inward man may be renewed day by day; and give patience for all Thy will and preparedness for all issues.

We desire to commend to Thee all Christian people and their work. We pray that Thou wouldst enlighten all Thy servants as to Thy holy will, and that Thou wouldst draw all of them nearer to the Master, and make them more fully possessors of His Spirit and of His life. And do Thou give power and Thy blessing to all the efforts made for the welfare and betterment of men's condition in this and in other lands. Especially prosper the ministrations of that great truth which delivers mankind from its deepest evils. And do Thou bless us as we come to Thee now. Look upon our country and our Sovereign and all the rulers of other realms. Order all the calamities and perturbations of the nations to bring forth the establishment of that Kingdom which is peace and righteousness and joy.

We pray Thee to hear us; to give us Thy blessing in our service, and to direct all our thoughts; for Christ our Saviour's sake.

LXXXIII

Lord! teach us how to pray, and prepare our hearts to cherish, as well as to express, the desires which Thou dost delight to answer.

Thou art our Light and our Salvation, and the Strength of our lives. Help us to make Thee the Joy of our hearts. Look upon us as we come now, laden with many burdens, some of them laid on our shoulders by Thee, some of them pulled down on our

heads by ourselves. And do Thou help us to cast away the one and to bear the other.

We bless Thee for all the manifold and manifest tokens of loving-kindness and tender care which Thou hast lavished upon us so ceaselessly and so wisely. Now that Thou hast crowned all Thy other gifts by giving to us Him in Whom all Thy gifts are stored, we beseech Thee, that as our best possession Thou wouldst give us the power and the grace to take the things that are freely given to us of God. Blessed be Thy Name! Thou art not worshipped by men's hands or hearts, as though Thou didst need anything. Blessed be Thy Name! Thou art the giving God. And we would draw near to Thee now with empty hands, and pray that the lifting up of these may be as the evening sacrifice.

We thank Thee, O Lord! for all Thy great mercies to us, abundant and constant, and we pray that we may have the grace given to us to reckon in these mercies our sorrows, and our losses, our pains and our disappointments. May all things work together for good to us because we love God. And may we be thankful for all the way by which the Lord our God has led us these many years. Cleanse our hearts, we beseech Thee, from every kind of false aim and vain love. Purify the loves that are there. May they all be consistent with, and subordinate to, our supreme love to Thee. May all our joys of earthly affection be made still more blessed because we love those whom we love in God, and God in them.

We pray Thee to strengthen us day by day for our various work. We thank Thee that in everything we can manifest Whose we are and Whom we serve. And we beseech Thee that we may more and more be able to

apply the laws of the Kingdom to the things of our daily life, and may link ever the greatest principles with the smallest duties. Preserve us, we pray Thee, from getting evil out of our work. Thou hast appointed it that it may bring us nearer to Thee, and that by it we may give expression to our inmost desires to serve Thee, but our feeble hearts and faltering hands do often misuse our duties as well as our joys. And we make of them sometimes a veil that hides us from Thee, and makes us forget to Whom we truly belong. We beseech Thee that it may be less so with us in the time to come, and that we may more continually and joyfully and completely yield ourselves unto Thee, that the work of our hands may be Thy work, and so be established upon us, and we be established and not perverted by it. Breathe Thy gracious Spirit over us all, O Lord! We thank Thee that we can gather together thus. And we pray that for none of us it may be for the worse that we thus assemble. Be Thou Thyself near us. Oh! that we may all have brought Christ with us, and so gathered in His Name may find Him in the midst of us.

Accept us as we come to Thee now, O Lord! Quicken our hearts from their many evils. Help us to be true to our best selves, to our highest resolutions. Help us to live as we pray, and to pray as we should. And do Thou look upon us now, and give us Thy blessing in this hour of worship; forgiving all our sins, cleansing all our hearts, revealing to each of us more of Thy goodness, and drawing into close fellowship with Thyself any of us who may be forgetting Thee, and living without Thee. We ask every blessing and all else which Thou knowest better than we do that we need, through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

LXXXIV

O LORD, our God! we would adore and bless Thee when we think that Thou wilt in very deed dwell with the humble and the contrite in heart, and dost before all temples choose the spirits of them that love Thee. We beseech Thee that we who profess and call ourselves Christians may indeed take heed lest we defile the temples of God, and so destroy them, since Thou canst not abide where evil is. Purge our hearts by Thy indwelling, for Thine indwelling; and help us, in purity and longing, to open wide every gate of our spirits that Thou mayst enter in and lodge there for ever. Be not as a wayfaring man which turneth aside to tarry for a night and departs in the morning, but make Thy settled abode with and in us. We beseech Thee, drive thence all the evil things that we have lodged within our spirits.

We pray for Thy blessing to rest upon us, according to all our different circumstances, troubles, duties, hopes, or fears. Be Thou near each of us as we may severally require. Give to us the special gifts which Thy special dealings demand. O Lord! strengthen us for all our duty. May we do it gladly though in itself it may often be unwelcome, repulsive, or burdensome. May we find that all things go easily when we do them as unto the Lord.

Do Thou help us, we pray Thee, in any sorrows or difficulties, or trials, which Thy loving fatherly providence may send us, whether these affect ourselves in mind, body, or estate, or any that are dear to us. We pray Thee that for all we may be able to accept Thy holy will, and in submission find peace, and to cast all

our anxiety upon the Lord, knowing that He careth for us.

We bless Thee and praise Thee for all Thy good gifts, for all the things that gladden our hearts, and enrich our lives. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us rightly to use such benefits, and never to let their brightness stay our eyes nor obscure Thyself. We beseech Thee to speak to us in our worship, and through us to carry Thy word to all our hearts. May it influence our wills, and do something to mould our lives.

We pray for all Christian congregations who are, or have been, gathered together, or who will be, as Thy sun goes round the world this day. We pray that with all Thy servants who in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours, large blessings may rest, clear insight may be granted to them, and hearts to love and to do as well as to know Thy holy will.

Hear us in our petitions, mercifully regard us as we bow before Thee, grant us Thy blessing in this hour of worship, help us in all that we do, to worship Thee as really in act as we now do in word, and, we hope, in spirit.

All that we ask is for the sake of Jesus Christ our Advocate and High Priest Whom Thou hearest always.

LXXXV

O Lord, the Fountain of all joys! to dwell with Whom, and to know and love Whom were life and blessedness eternal, we beseech Thee to help us to rejoice in the Lord always. May our hearts and wills and minds be so constantly set on Thyself, and kept in harmony with

Thee, that nothing shall come between us and God, nor anything prevent the full tide of Thy light and love and pleasures from flowing into us. We pray Thee to unite our hearts in the fear and love of Thy holy Name, and whatsoever other we may have on which our efforts or affection may be fixed, we beseech Thee that we may see and love and do all things in God, and may thus be brought nearer to Thyself by what would otherwise draw us away from Thee. Thou knowest our weakness, O Lord! We pray for Thy gracious help in our daily life, with all its occupations, and sometimes absorbing and sometimes perplexing and distressing thoughts and events. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst indeed fulfil Thine own gracious promises, and make all things work together for good, and strengthen us to fulfil the condition on which Thou wilt so make them that we may love Thee with all our hearts. We pray for Thy guidance, wheresoever we may especially need it. We pray to be delivered from our own misunderstandings of Thy purposes and misreadings of Thy will. We beseech Thee that we may never take counsel of inclination, but may always listen to the voice of God that speaks in the hearts that are hushed to hear, and fixed to obey it. We beseech Thee for Thy gracious help and presence in our worship of this evening. Be Thou near to each of us according to our different casts of character and present condition. And grant, we pray Thee, that none of us drawing near Thee thus in outward seeming may in heart be far from Thee.

Bless us, O Lord! according to our need, accept our thanks for all Thy great and wonderful mercies to us, for the daily benefits that flood our whole lives, for all Thy tender care and wise providence. We thank Thee

that in Thee are all our ways, and that Thou givest unto all men life and breath and all things. And we come to Thee laden with Thy benefits, and lift up to Thee a petition that Thou wouldst give us clearness of vision to apprehend the movements of Thy hands in all that befalls us, and to pierce beyond the discernment of the human causes and earthly conditions to Thyself Who, unmoved, movest all things and doest Thy will with us.

O Lord! take us into Thy care now; we beseech Thee mercifully to forgive all our imperfections and sins. Cleanse our hearts from every idolatry and from all error. May we all be indeed Thy children, the servants and soldiers of Thy dear Son. We ask every blessing for His sake.

LXXXVI

Almighty God! Who hidest in Thy hand all good, and dost out of Thy full heart give that which we most need when we desire it; we beseech Thee for clean hearts. We pray that we may choose Thee for our portion, and firmly adhere to the choice amid all temptations and difficulties. So shall all things be on our side, and all things yield to us their sweetest sweetness and their highest good.

O Lord! shed upon this assembled congregation the Spirit of Thy grace to accompany the message of Thy love. Thou knowest how weak and unworthy we are to handle it, either in the way of hearing or of speaking; but we beseech Thee that according to our divers parts in this service Thou wouldst bestow upon us Thy gracious influences; and give him that speaks the message which Thou shalt bless, and them that hear

the understanding heart which shall be good soil for the good seed of Thy word.

O Lord! we commend one another to Thy care in regard to all our daily duties and different circumstances. The Lord be with us in each place and work where His providence has set us to earn our daily bread, and do our daily duty; of whatever kind that may be, whether great or small, whether welcome or unwelcome, may we be ready for it, and find that in doing what we ought there is great reward.

We beseech Thee to keep us from the temptations of our callings, from the weakness of our characters, from all in our circumstances that is meant to test, and may hinder, our faith and love. We beseech Thee that if any of us are bearing any special burden of care or sorrow, of responsibility or duty, Thou wouldst be with such. We commend to Thee sad hearts, we pray for all disappointed ones, for all who are learning how fleeting are our earthly joys, and how only God lasts, and is enough for a man. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst with the lesson send help to accept it; and may we all, in the matters in which we may be exercised, submit to Thy holy will, and so gain Thy rich blessing.

We beseech Thee to be near us now; draw near to every heart in Thy presence. Give us some word to speak which shall be Thy word, and let the power of the Lord be present among us and felt by each of us in this service.

Hear us now, O Father! forgive our many sins; grant us Thy gracious help and presence whilst we worship, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXXVII

HELP us, O Lord, our God! that we may come to Thee now with hearts laden with Thy blessings and lips charged with Thy praise. Surely if we should hold our peace the very stones would cry out. Thou hast enriched us with many blessings, Thou hast borne with our many unworthinesses and departures from Thee. Thou hast sought to win us the more the further away we have gone. Thy seeking hand has followed us in all our ways. Thy restraining grace has often kept us back from sin. Thou hast lavished upon us the gifts of Thy goodness, and above all Thou hast given Thy Son for our life. Therefore, O Lord, we come to Thee now, not less impelled by our weakness and our own sense of need than attracted by the thought of Thine infinite sweetness and goodness. And we beseech Thee that not only for a moment whilst we are gathered here, but all through our dusty daily lives, we may have sounding in our ears the sweet music of the thought of Thee, and may be guarded from sin, and not only gladdened here in our time of worship by communion with Thyself, and may find Thee not only to be as in such hours as the present of devout contemplation, the Sun of our souls, but in the midst of the strife of life find Thee a shield as well.

We pray Thee to be near us at all times, and according to all our different circumstances shape Thy gifts. O Lord! when we understand best what we need and see most deeply into our own hearts and their requirements, we feel that God, and God only, can be the food of our souls. We pray Thee to forgive us that we have so often been untrue to that conviction, and followed after ashes for bread, and spent our labour and highest

longings upon things, good if Thou comest with them, but not unless Thou dost. O Lord! forgive us all our forgetfulness, all our waywardness, all our godlessness of life and heart, and help us in time to come that we may indeed be more touched with Thy love, and sure of Thy grace, and always conscious of Thy presence. May that influence us for all good, keeping us clear of temptation, nerving us for difficulty, bracing us up for duty, purifying our hearts and satisfying our souls. We pray that we may have clearer eyes to see Thy presence and the movement of Thy will and of Thy hand in every common thing. May Thy creatures not shut Thee out from us, either from our thoughts or from our hearts. May our loves be hallowed, may our duties be ladders by which we reach God. May everything that befalls us be transparent, and show us Thyself through itself. So may all life bring us nearer to Thee, and all things minister to us occasions for thankfulness.

Oh! be Thou near us as we bow before Thee. However feeble our faith and love, we hope that we have come together in Christ's name, and so we ask the fulfilment of Christ's promise, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be with us, and in the midst of us. O Lord! regard us all according to all the variety of our necessities and circumstances. If any of us are passing through the waters be Thou with such that they may not be overwhelmed by the floods. If any of us are passing through the fires be Thou with such, that nothing may be consumed but the bonds that bind them.

Take us all, we pray Thee now, into Thy gracious care; let Thy presence and Thy love and Thy peace be with us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXXVIII

O Lord, our God! we too would pray that prayer for ourselves, great as it is, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst 'stablish our hearts unblamable in holiness. Purge us, we pray Thee, from all evil, and let Thy grace, used by our own earnest effort, perfect that which is lacking concerning our faith. Thou knowest, O Lord! how much is lacking. Teach us to know it better, and to feel it more. And may we labour earnestly day by day, as Thy true children and faithful servants, to fill up that which is behind in our own selves, and to press nearer and nearer to that great and wondrous goal which we believe we shall one day reach, of being conformed to the likeness of Thy dear Son. O Lord! it sometimes seems to us too great to be possible, and our feeble faith and our past experience often make us doubt, and dim our hopes. But we beseech Thee to teach us what the will of the Lord is concerning us, even our sanctification, and to aim at that with more earnestness and continuance and confidence than we have ever done in the past. Let Thy gracious hand touch all our hearts now, and Thy good Spirit help us, in hearing and in speaking what we hope is Thy holy word.

O Lord! deliver us from all imperfections in our conceptions and utterance of Thy truth, and in so far as it may be possible grant that there may be no human mixture of weakness with the immortal strength of the word of the Lord; but such as there is, do Thou, O Lord! hinder from hurting Thy truth. And do Thou give Thy servants grace to discern between the earthen vessel and the treasure, and whatsoever they may do about the former to clasp the other as their true riches.

May we all this morning feel that God has some message to our hearts and wills. O Lord! bless, in like manner, all Thy people throughout the world, and wherever there are good men gathered this day to seek Thy face, hide not Thy face far from them, but grant that many drooping spirits might be revived, and many darkened minds enlightened, and many feeble wills strengthened, and many feet braced up to run with patience the race that is set before us.

O Lord! be with all our friends who may be absent from our communion this morning. Especially be Thou in chambers of sickness, and in homes of sorrow; and let Thy gracious, gentle, comforting presence be felt there. We pray for our country, for our Sovereign, for all rulers and persons of influence and authority in this and other lands. We beseech Thee that Thy Kingdom may come. We pray that Thou wouldst overrule all changes, all selfishness of nations, for the furtherance of Thy great purposes, and that Thou wouldst bring the time, and help Thy servants to work to bring it, when the Lord's Name shall be known, and His Throne established, on the top of the mountains.

We beseech Thee to hear us, to give us Thy blessing in our service, and to help us in all that we may say or do; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXXIX

O Lord, our Father! Who knowest how to give good gifts to Thy children, give us, we beseech Thee, the best of gifts, Thy divine Spirit, to dwell in our spirits. Help us to open our hearts for that blessed entrance, and never to quench or to grieve the indwelling Fire

by our own negligence, worldliness, faithlessness, or sin. Help our infirmities, we beseech Thee, by that gracious gift, that we may desire earnestly what we most need, and that all our coldness may be changed into warmth of devotion and lowliness of submission. We know not what to pray for as we ought. Do Thou Thyself teach us, and inspire the desires which are in accordance with Thy holy will, and which Thou dost ever delight to gratify. Help us, we pray Thee, more and more in our daily lives to set ever before us Thine own blessed example as given to us in Jesus Christ our Lord, and may we be conformed to the image of Thy dear Son in us. May that Spirit of adoption abide whereby we know ourselves Thy children and cry to Thee as our Father. In us may the Spirit of burning ever operate, purging our evil and quickening our coldness, and vitalising our deadness. May that free Spirit set us at liberty from the bonds of self-will and every temptation. May the Spirit of Thy Son draw us near to Thyself, and fill us with Thy peace and power.

We thank Thee for all Thy mercies in the past, for all that we possess now, for all the hopes for the future, and most of all for those highest blessings which tower above Time, and fill past, present, and future alike. Help us to take more fully the things so freely given to us by God. May we be clothed with Thy righteousness. May we be endowed with Thy strength. May the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus make us free from the law of sin and death. May memories and hopes be alike hallowed and blessed. May we look back to the Cross, and upwards and forward to the Throne. Help us, in very deed, to be partakers of the power of Christ's Resur-

rection even whilst we live in this mortal body. And Oh! do Thou strengthen us now, and help us to recall wandering thoughts, and to concentrate desire and meditation upon Thyself, upon Christ, Thy Son, Who brings Thee to us, and upon the word which brings Him to us. We pray that Thou wouldst accompany all our service with Thy blessing. O Lord! Thou knowest how much we need to be set free from the bonds of Time and Sense. Thou knowest how much our feeble resolutions need strengthening, and our wavering faith needs steadying, and our dying love needs cleansing. We pray that all these gifts may, in some measure, come to each of us by our gathering together to-day, so that we may be better equipped every way, in mind and heart, for the battle of life, and for all the duties of our day that lie before us still. We would recognise Thy hand in all our daily lives. It is Thou Who dost give, and in no less love dost sometimes withhold and sometimes withdraw. And we pray that we may have hearts submissive, not because we are compelled to yield to irresistible power, but because we delight to accept the will of our loving Father, our best Friend.

O Lord! accept our thanks for every blessing, be near to us now, and breathe Thy life, and Thy peace, and joy into all our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XC

Almighty Father! Thou seest all our hearts and all our needs, and knowest them better than we, and Thou dost interpret our desires more truly and wisely than we ourselves. We come blessing Thee that we can

spread our wants before Thee. Thou lovest Thy children too well to give them the stones that they often ask for, thinking them bread. We would submit ourselves, O Lord! to Thy wise counsel, and accept what Thou dost give, believing that it is for the best. We pray that our hearts may always be kept in the peaceful faith that all things work together for our good if we love God. And we pray that our hearts may more and more be brought under the elevating and calming influence of that Divine love which shall hallow all human affections, and sanctify all duties, and fit us peacefully and joyfully to pass through every vicissitude of life.

We thank Thee, O Lord! that we can come to Thee whensoever we will. We pray that none of us may be strangers to the peace, and joy, and strength which we may draw from Thyself. Look upon us in all the variety of character and circumstances. We bless Thee, that however diverse these may be, however our natures and wants may differ, Thou Thyself art more than sufficient for each and for all, for evermore. Help us to subordinate all other wishes, and treasures, and loves to Thee, and to give our hearts more and more to Thyself. It is only Thou Who canst fill them, and make us blessed, and quiet, and strong. Guide Thou us in all our ways; if to any of us the path is dark, rough, thorny, we beseech Thee that we may have with us the Companion Who makes all paths paths of pleasantness and ways of peace, and that our hearts may burn within us as Jesus Christ walks with us by the way. And on the road, O Lord! help us to think of Thee, to speak to Thee, to do Thy will, and when it pleases Thee, bring us to the home where there is rest.

We beseech Thee to comfort any that are in any

sadness. How many of us that prayer takes in, O Lord, Thou knowest! Oh do Thou stanch all wounds; bless all the trouble, help us bravely to bear it, and wisely to use it; help us to get all the good out of it which Thou dost leave, and give us in it all the clearer vision of Thyself. Help us in our worship; we beseech Thee to draw our hearts all near to Thyself. Guide us when we try to speak in Thy Name. May the power of the Lord be breathed into our feeble hearts, and the blessedness of the Master, and the fulness of His gifts to men, be somewhat manifested even in our poor representations of Thy Divine and ineffable truth.

O Lord! bless all Christian congregations, all communities of such, by whatever name they may be called, and however they may be parted on earth. We beseech Thee that all who hold the Head may come to understand their brethren better, to draw nearer to them, and to live more in the blissful fellowship of saints.

We commend ourselves now to Thy care. Oh forgive all our evil, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

XCI

O Lord, our gracious Father! the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible! we come to Thee, and pray that Thou wouldst help us to yield our hearts to Thy supreme control, and to enter with will and mind into that Kingdom which is righteousness, and peace, and joy.

We thank Thee that Thou rulest over all by blessing all, and that Thy dominion, which is an everlasting dominion, is a Kingdom of Love, Whose tender mercies

are over all Thy works. May we yield ourselves more and more, and with increasing decision and gladness, to be Thy faithful servants and subjects, and enter into the peace which belongs to them who know themselves to be ruled by God. O Lord! help us, we pray Thee, day by day, in our ordinary duties, in the common cares and little tasks of this fleeting life, to realise how close we come to Thee, and how large the gifts which Thou canst crowd into a moment of time. Accept our surrender, make it more deep and real, more lasting throughout our days. May we carry with us, not only when, as now, we are thinking of Thee, and bowing before Thee, but in all the distractions of daily occupations the blessed thought that we are still with God; and may there be nothing to us repellent or dark in the thought of Thy sovereignty. May we feel more and more that our Father is our Judge, and that our Judge is our Father.

We draw near with humble thanksgiving for all Thy great benefits towards us. Alas! We do not sufficiently associate Thy loving-kindness with our mercies whilst we are enjoying them, nor are our duties enough hallowed to us by the thought that they are Thy appointment even whilst we are discharging them. But we beseech Thee that we may now be able to draw nearer to Thee, and realise with a vividness which shall leave impressions for many days upon our hearts that all which we enjoy is from God, and all which we have His gift, and all which we have to bear and do His loving appointment. O Lord! cleanse our hearts, we pray Thee, from all foolish and fond earthly affections which come between us and Thee. Deliver our wills from all purposes which are contrary to Thy holy desires and loving will concerning us. May we think

as Thou dost, and wish, and loathe the same things, and never set our desires against Thine appointment, nor rush to our ends without the clear sanction of Thy will. Help us day by day, be near us in all the duties, the circumstances, the conflicts, the struggles, the sorrows and disappointments which take the edge off so many of our joys, and are meant to bring us to that serene land where no disappointment or sorrow shall ever be experienced.

We thank Thee for every gift of Thine, we bring our poor hearts to Thee, and pray Thee to quicken and cleanse, to confirm anything that is good in them, and make the weakest among us as the Angel of God, delighting to do Thy will, and to hearken to the voice of Thy commandments.

Accept us as we come now, we beseech Thee to be still near us and to bless us. Give us answers of peace, through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

XCII

O Lord, our gracious God! help us, we beseech Thee, that in our hearts there may dwell, as the fountain of all good, that love which is kindled at the fire of Thy love. May we indeed be clothed with Jesus Christ. May the mind that was in Him be in us, and may we adorn the teaching of that great Saviour in all things, by daily conformity to His image and will.

Thou knowest our hearts, and all their weaknesses, and falls, and fears. Thou seest how so often we resolve better and higher things than we love, and Thou knowest how often we not only fall beneath, but go against, our consciences and Thy voice in our hearts. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst heal the schism

between what we will and what we do, and that Thou wouldst help us, by the continual bestowment of that great Spirit of Thine which is given to all who shut not their hearts in unbelief against it, that thereby we may live more soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world.

O Lord! help all who to-day open their lips in Thy Name. May Thy people draw near to Thee, and find it no vain thing to wait upon the Lord. Look upon us in our daily duties, and different walks in life, and according to our necessities do Thou shape Thy gifts. To sad hearts come, O Lord! we pray Thee, with upholding and reviving and comforting grace, and help all of us who are exercised by any kind of sorrow to take all the good out of it which Thou hast stored in it, and may none of Thy people waste Thy precious gifts of afflictions and trial.

We beseech Thee to look upon us now, to let Thy mercy be upon us, and do Thou bless and keep us in all our ways, through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

XCIII

O Lord, our Father! we thank Thee that though Thou art high above our thoughts, yet Thou dwellest amidst the praises of Thine Israel, and dost accept the poor tribute of glory, thanksgiving, and light, and blessing which we can bring. Open Thou our hearts and minds for the contemplation and the reception of Thy great and wondrous goodness to us, and open our lips to Thy praise, and order our lives that they too may be worship.

We thank Thee that we can come to Thee now with all our weaknesses, our needs, and our sins, and be sure of a welcome from our Father's heart, and of blessings from His hands. We thank Thee for the access of faith with confidence to Thee. Oh! may we never count it a small thing that we have the prerogative of entrance into the King's presence, and can speak to Thee without fear and without concealment all the desires of our hearts. May we be more accustomed to test our wishes and our purposes by our willingness to make Thee aware of them. May we remember ever that Thou knowest us altogether before we speak, and so may our worship of Thee be in deepest truth in simplest sincerity, never mocking Thee with words beyond, or not corresponding to, our faith and our feelings, and never seeking to hide from Thee any of our weaknesses and our sins. O Lord! we bless Thee that we can freely speak unto Thee, and that nothing need hinder us from spreading the very depths of our hearts, and the darknesses that are there, out before Thy pure eyes and perfect judgment. We would not only not shrink from, but would pray for, that perfect knowledge of Thine to be brought to bear upon us. Search us, O God!

and try us, and may the thought that Thou knowest us altogether, and that nothing is hid from the eye of Him with Whom we have to do, not be a terror to us but a joy. We thank Thee that Thou art ready to fight against, and to banish from us, the sin which Thou dost see. We thank Thee that Thou lovest us altogether, even though Thou knowest us altogether. We beseech Thee that Thy cleansing grace, guided by Thy perfect understanding of what we are, and need, may be welcomed by us, even when Thy Spirit convicts us of sin. O Lord! we would bow to the conviction, and pray that we may never forget, and may ever cleave to Thee the more closely because we know that apart from Thee we have no power to keep ourselves from transgression.

O Lord! let Thy most holy and gracious Spirit be granted in abundance to each of us. Truly Thou dost not wait to be asked, for hast Thou not given Thy Spirit when Thou didst give Thy Son? May we take the things that are freely given to us of God, and not be erring by asking what is already bestowed, and forgetting to use that which we have.

We pray for Thy help in putting away anything in our worship that may conflict with our full entrance into the purposes of this hour of worship, and our full possession of the treasures which Thou by it dost mean that we should receive. We bless Thee for all the memories, and the hopes built on them, that this day brings. We thank Thee for a risen Saviour. We bless Thee for Him Who died, yea! rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us, and in His great and prevailing Name we desire to come to Thee and pray that we may be found in Him not having our own right-

eousness; and that in Him we may receive the fulness of Thy grace and the constant presence of Thy loving Spirit.

O Lord! hear us in our prayer, forgive our many sins, transgressions, and evils, and grant Thy gracious presence in our worship, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

XCIV

O LORD, our God! help us, we beseech Thee, to welcome into our hearts, and to crown as our Lord and Saviour, Thy Son. And may our believing eyes see Him sitting at the right hand of power. We bless Thee for the assurance we have that that dear Lord lives and reigns, and uses all His power for the furtherance of the great purposes of His Cross, and the blessing of them that follow in His footsteps. May we be of such, and so have our lives regulated and influenced by Him as that even whilst we are here on earth they may be, even in their deepest roots, hid with Christ in God.

O Lord! bless each of us here in Thy presence; give us all the help that we need for the discharge of the daily duties, for the enjoyment wisely and righteously of the daily mercies, for the victory over the daily temptations. We pray Thee to lead us by Thy wise providences, and to make our hearts quick to understand, and docile to accept, the meaning of all Thy dealings with us. May we never be perplexed, nor at a loss to know what God the Lord is speaking to us. May we have the clear vision that comes as the reward of the submissive will, and so understand the loving-kindness of the Lord manifested to us in all the variety of His providences towards us.

We pray Thee to guide us each as we may severally require, with Thy wisdom which is profitable to direct, and to put into our hearts more and more of that good Spirit which shall purge our spirits, and make us strong to will and to do whatsoever things are lovely and of good report.

Be near any of us that have any special burdens to carry. Thou knowest what these are. We thank Thee that in all our afflictions Thou art afflicted, and the Angel of Thy Presence is by us ready to save. May we find that it is so when our dark days come, and whatever may be the complexion of Thy present providences may we take from Thee all their lessons and receive from Thee all their good.

Do Thou bless any that are absent from our meeting this morning and be in all sick-chambers and sad homes. Let Thy mercy, Thy comforts, and Thy gentle presence be felt as a healing and a balm by all whose hearts are wounded and sore.

We pray for Thy presence and help now, enable us to listen and to speak Thy holy word. With like blessing, O Lord! visit all congregations of Christian people in every communion and in every land, this day, and let the Name of the Lord be magnified and His praise sung through all the earth; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XCV

O Lord! help us each to say, in the depths of our loving hearts, Thou art my God! And may we unite together now to praise and exalt Thy Name, for all the wonderful things that Thou hast done, the faithfulness and truth which have ruled Thy counsels from of old. This morning especially we would come to Thee,

rejoicing in the thought of that strong City which we have with salvation for its walls and bulwarks, and pray that Thou wouldst help us to enter in and dwell there, surrounded by the sure defence of Thy mighty purpose, and guarded from all foes by the bulwarks which Thou dost cast around them whose hearts are stayed on Thee.

We come to Thee with thanksgivings this morning, especially for that great work which all Thy Churches this day commemorate, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Saviour, in Whom, O Lord! grant that we too may rise from the death of self and sin, and may enter into the hidden and heavenly life of Christ, even whilst we are here below. We bless Thee for the victory over foes and fears, for the assurances that He Who is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, has gone to prepare a place for us, and that in His exaltation we are exalted. Help us, we pray Thee, whensoever we are compassed about with evils and with sorrows, and seem to feel that for ourselves and for others the time is yet far distant when all things are put under man, to look to Jesus crowned with glory and honour, and beholding Him, to triumph in our destiny and certain triumph in the future. We thank Thee for the life which comes from that risen Lord Who dwells in all the humble hearts that try to trust in Him, and aspire after closer communion and truer faith. We pray that we too may partake in that life which hath died to sin and lives to God. Oh! purge our hearts, we pray Thee, from all their foolish wanderings away from Thee, and bring us, with settled purpose, with lowly resolution, with grateful surrender, and with triumphant faith to live the lives that we live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God. Cleanse us, we pray Thee, from all our evils, purge our hearts from

sin. Take from us all errors of understanding, all faults of conduct, everything that would come between us and Thee. And may our happy hearts be kin to God, and in union with Him find our rest and strength, our purity and our peace. We pray Thee to look upon us, and shed abroad Thy great love upon our hearts. Whatever may have been the character of the week that is past may we enter to-day into a happier and a fuller possession of the life of God through Christ. And may our meeting this morning tend to confirm in us all that may be good, and to deliver us from the dominion of every evil. We bless Thee for all Thy providence to us; we would include in our thankfulness all the way by which the Lord our God has led us, even though often it has been in valleys of the Shadow of Death, and amidst places rough and difficult. Yet, Lord, we thank Thee, and we believe that when we see in Heaven we shall praise the road. We pray that it may be so even now with us in anticipation. What we know not now we shall know hereafter. And we pray for grace to live, and quiet faith far away from murmuring and from vain regrets; animated by the bright hope, and buoyant with the cheerful courage which flows from union with Thyself.

O Lord! forgive all the sins that might hinder our full realisation of the benefits meant us in this service. And seal Thy grace upon all our hearts that we may draw near to Thee now with the spirit of children, and cry, 'Abba! Father!' to Him Who will bow the heavens and come down; and speak to us and say, 'Thou art My son!'

We pray Thee to hear us, to forgive all our unworthiness and our many transgressions, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XCVI

O LORD, our Father! open our hearts, we beseech Thee, and clear our understandings that we may indeed hear that blessed saying, hard to them that believe not, full of grace to them that accept. And may we know what it is to live the lives that we live here by the indwelling Spirit of Jesus Christ, and so be delivered not only from the present death of sin, and the separation from Thee, but from all the pangs and pains of mortality, and from that darkest death of separation from Thee hereafter. O Lord! look upon us, we pray Thee, a company of needy and sinful creatures, and help us to take what is already bestowed, the unspeakable gift of eternal life! Lord! we are not straitened in Thee but in ourselves. Thou art like the dew upon the grass which tarrieth not for men, but comes unasked; and ere we speak Thou hast heard. Help us, we pray Thee, then, to take the things that are freely given to us of God, lest at any time we should be deceiving ourselves by thinking that Thou hast not supplied, when it is ourselves that have not accepted. Clothe us, we pray Thee, with righteousness and grace, refine our characters by communion with Thyself. May the beauty of holiness pass into our lives from union with Thee, and may they who look upon us behold our countenance irradiated by the glory that we hold, and shining as angels' faces.

O Lord! Thou knowest what we are, and hast Thyself appointed the conditions of our present life. Do Thou shape Thy gifts according to both, and give us the things that our own weaknesses most require for strengthening, and our own evil tendencies for correc-

tion. And give us, too, the special gifts which our special circumstances and individual duties most need. If any of us need especial quickening and stirring up, may we not be left to indulgence and indolence. If any of us are groping in the darkness as to what we shall think of Thee, and of Thy holy will, and of Jesus Christ, may we be led to see Him, the Eternal Son of the Father, and in Him to see God. If any of us are perplexed about outward things, or in difficulty, O Lord! draw near to all such troubled hearts, and grant that we may all feel that we have in Heaven a better and an enduring substance, and that we have in ourselves riches which cannot take to themselves wings and fly away. If any of us have wounded affections, sad and empty hearts, and are destined to loneliness and sorrow, we pray that Thou wouldst be near such, and be the Companion of them that are alone, and the Comforter of all troubled souls. And wherever Thou hast come with Thy messages of sorrow and bereavement, come too, O Lord, with Thy gracious comfort, and gentle, strong consolations. And may all Thy servants learn to say 'It is the Lord! Let Him do what seemeth Him good.' So may they begin to find the peace which passes understanding creeping into their hearts.

May the word of the Lord not be declared in vain in our worship of this morning, nor our coming together be for the worse. We thank Thee for Thy great mercies; draw near and bless us now, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

XCVII

O Lord! Thou art our God, and we pray Thee that each of us may now feel the personal bond of union that unites every one of us to our Father's heart. We beseech Thee to give us Thy blessing, gathered as we are, and to let Thy love come down upon us, that whatever may be the thoughts or purposes or motives with which we have come into this place we may find Thee here, and be found of Thee, and receive some touch from Thy quickening finger, some gifts from Thy healing hand.

O Lord! regard us all according to our different necessities. How wide these are! We know not what to pray for, for ourselves, as we ought. How shall we gather into one the diverse desires of this assembly? O Lord! we thank Thee that there is one gift in which all gifts are comprehended, and we beseech Thee that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God our Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit may be with us all.

XCVIII

O Lord, our gracious Father! we would rejoice in Thee, and bless Thee for all the peace and pure, lasting gladness which flow into hearts that are at rest in God. Thou knowest how often we have sought to hew out for ourselves cisterns, and they have proved to be broken, that could hold no water. Many of our bright days have passed away; joys have faded, have become bitter, lights have gone out in the blackness of darkness; friends have dropped from our sides; hopes have been frustrated, or, if fulfilled, have still disappointed. Many of us have learned, by the dis-

cipline of life, how bitter, as well as how evil a thing it is to seek for the deep sources of our joy apart from Thee. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us, made wise by experience, if so it be that our experiences have taught us, and made wise by Thy Spirit at all events, to withdraw our hearts from earth and to set them steadfastly upon God. May we all seek first the Kingdom and the righteousness. May we all live for something higher and nobler than self and self-pleasing. May we not only feel the presence of duty but the impulse of love. And may we serve Thee with glad hearts, and bring to Thee the acceptable offering of grateful and devout spirits. O Lord! if there are any of us before Thee this evening who find it especially hard to respond to the call to rejoice in the Lord alway, draw near to such, we beseech Thee, and comfort and succour them. If there are any of us far away from Thee, and not desiring to be any nearer Thee, who have been living for the things seen and temporal, and forgetting all the higher, O Lord, upon our poor words this evening let Thy rich Spirit descend, that the message of Thy grace and truth may be brought to many hearts, and that some of us may be gathered in from the paths of sin and self, and made to run in the way of Thy commandments with enlarged and glad hearts.

We beseech Thee, Lord! that forasmuch as we know so little of one another's desires and needs, Thou wouldst bless us each in all our diversity of circumstances and character. We would all join in the prayer that the Lord would be merciful to us and bless us, and would lift up the light of His countenance upon us, and would cause His face to shine on us, and give us peace.

O Lord! give us some message to speak that shall be Thy message. May it be winged by Thine own hand, and find its way to many who may need it. We bless Thee for all Thy great loving-kindness and tender care of us. We would recognise Thy hand in every good thing that befalls us, and praise Thee for the commonest, the most familiar, the most insignificant, of the many blessings the sum of which make up so great a mercy. O Lord! we praise Thee for the great things and the small things, for the gifts that perish with the using, and for the gifts that grow by use. For all the brooks by the way with which Thou dost refresh and strengthen them that put their trust in Thee, and most of all for that to which the way that is often rough, and through a thirsty land, will lead us, if we are truly the servants of God, and of His Christ. For all the past, its sorrows and its losses as well as its gifts and its joys; for all the present, its duties and difficulties as well as delights, and for all that future of unmingled and manifest and ineffable good, we desire to praise Thee, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst grant us Thy gracious help and presence in our worship this evening; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

XCIX

O Lord, our gracious God! Whose ways are all loving-kindness and truth, we have none even in the heavens but Thee. May there be none on earth that we desire by the side of Thee. Draw us, we beseech Thee, to Thyself by giving to us deep and blessed experience of how good it is to draw near unto God. And grant, we pray Thee, that into our waiting hearts, empty without

Thee, there may flow the river of the water of life that we may be filled with all the fulness of God.

O Lord! we thank Thee for all the gifts of Thy hand. May they prepare our hearts more for desiring, and so possessing, the higher gift of Thyself. We bless Thee for providences, we bless Thee more for that which all Thy providences but prepare the way, the communication of Thine own life, Thy joys, Thy love, Thy grace. May our hearts not be empty of these, and then whatsoever our hands may be empty of, we shall not be in sorrow. Give us, we pray Thee, the brightness of Thine assured love to rest ever sunnily upon our hearts, and then our faces will shine with the reflected glory of the God with Whom we hold communion. We pray Thee to forgive all our imperfections, our manifold forgetfulness, the distractions to which we have yielded making us forget Thee in the midst of the mercies given and the duties appointed by Thyself. And help us in time to come, be the days before us few or many, to live more in touch with God, and to see Thee more in all things, and all things in Thyself. May there be no discord between the parts of our lives. May our work and our prayers go together. May we dwell peacefully because our hearts are united to fear Thy Name. Lift up upon us, we beseech Thee, this morning, the light of Thy countenance, and help us in this hour of worship that we may draw near to Thee with true hearts, in full assurance of faith, and putting away from us by Thy gracious aid whatever might hinder us from the enjoyment of the blessings and discharge of the sweet duties of an hour of prayer.

O Lord! purge our souls, we pray Thee, from vanities, bind our hearts to Thyself. May the springs of our life be more and more hid with Christ in

God. And may we this day derive from our worship quickening for all in us that is good, and weakening of all that is contrary to Thy holy will. We praise Thee for all Thy daily mercies, for the blessings lavishly bestowed upon us. Our song too is to be of mercy and of judgment, of judgment which is mercy, of mercy which does not shrink from judgment for our good. We thank Thee for all which Thou hast done; we beseech Thee that our hearts may be brought and kept in the peaceful confidence that all things work together for good.

Hear us in these our prayers; grant Thy gracious presence in our worship; answer our petitions through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

C

O LORD, our God! help us that we may ever cleave to, and root in our hearts, the blessed conviction that Thou art for us and in us, and so it matters not what may be against us. We bless Thee that nothing can be against them that have God on their sides, because they are on God's. And we beseech Thee that we may so pass through all the changes, and trials, and difficulties of this life as that they may be indeed our best friends, and bring us nearer to Thyself.

Oh! do Thou give to each of us in this hour of worship the needful blessings and grace, that it may be full of profit that shall endure for each of us, and that we may depart hence confirmed in our faith, relieved of our anxieties, more determined to run with patience the race set before us, and to make God the end and aim of all our lives. Do Thou grant us still Thy gracious help and increasingly reveal Thyself to us in

our assemblies; and help all who are here knit together in the bonds of Christian worship and communion to live in the world as becometh those whose Master is in the heavens, and whose home is by God's side.

Bless us, O Lord! in our daily work. Thou knowest the tasks Thou layest upon us, and the sorrows that some of us may have to carry. We bless Thee that we are not left alone, either to work or to endure. And we pray that Thou, Who hast promised to be with Thy people in six troubles, and not to forsake them in seven, and to be afflicted with them in all their afflictions, and to be their fellow-labourer in all their work, wouldst fulfil Thy promises to each of us, and help us to make ourselves such as that it is possible for Thee to dwell with us and to work with us. O Lord! if any of us have any special burdens on our hearts, or any darknesses shadowing our lives this morning, we pray Thee that Thou wouldst be very near to such, and wouldst help them to that grace of patient endurance and submission to Thy holy will, which is the soil wherein the peaceable fruit of righteousness doth ever spring. O Lord! bless all Christian communities gathered like us to-day, or who have been, or shall be assembled throughout the world in Thy Name. May the Christ Who is with all His people be with each, and may their worship be acceptable to Thee, and quickening and comforting to their own souls. We pray Thee to bless our country and our Sovereign, and all rulers and persons of influence and authority in every land.

We beseech Thee to take us all into Thy keeping, forgive our many sins, manifest Thy great love and goodness to us now, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CI

O LORD! Who hast bowed to call a man Thy friend, and hast spoken face to face with mortals, we come to Thee, and claim a humble place in Thy heart and a share in that love which passes all human friendship and affection. Blessed be Thy Name, O Lord! Thou hast bridged the gulf between us and Thee, and we are not separated from Thee by Thy greatness and our littleness, by Thy majesty and our lowliness, by Thy eternity and our mortality. We thank Thee that Thy great love leaps all these gulfs and holds us to Thy heart. May nothing part us from Thee, for we can only rend ourselves away from Thee by our own sinfulness, and even when we have sinned against Thee Thou lovest us still. Our transgressions are strong, but Thou art stronger. They are more than the hairs of our heads, so that we cannot look up when we think of them, but we will bethink ourselves of the mercies of God that cannot be counted, and are, if it might be possible, more innumerable still, and so we come to Thee, O Lord! trustfully, confidently, boldly, and pray for grace to spread out all our desires and all our thoughts before Thee, and gladly to welcome the searching of the Spirit of the Lord in our inmost parts. There make us to know wisdom, there plant deep and permanent the fear which has no torment, the love which is perfected in reverence.

We draw near to Thee this morning with thankfulness for all Thy gracious ways with us. And though our hearts do sometimes pause in our gratitude, and are bewildered by our sorrows and disappointments, yet we pray that here in the Sanctuary of God, we

may see more clearly, and without reserve or exception may lift up our thankful hearts to Thee for all the ways by which the Lord our God has led us these many years. Truly Thy mercy endureth for ever; Thy compassions fail not; they are new every morning, and every evening we have to record that great is Thy faithfulness, as the experience of another day has taught us, if we are wise. So we come to Thee, Lord! with blessings on our lips, and we hope with clear-sighted thankfulness in our hearts, and magnify Thy dealings with us, and pray for grace to trust Thee for all that is to come, and to thank Thee for all that is gone. Cleanse our hearts, we beseech Thee, by Thine own gracious influences, put that strong love within us which shall purge us of all uncleanness. May a better life than our own live in our spirits, and to us may it be Christ to live. Help us, we pray Thee, daily to war against all our faults, and reveal to us more and more clearly the things wherein we err, or go astray, or fall short of duty, and conscience, and Thy will. And help us to love Thee and to cleave to Thee with such purpose of mind and spirit that our hearts may be united in the fear of Thy Name.

Give to us prayers to offer here with the much incense which makes them acceptable, and may the lifting up of our empty hands be to Thee as the evening sacrifice. Fulfil, we beseech Thee, Thy gracious promises to us, unworthy as we are; bless the provisions of Thy house and fill Thy poor with bread. Here, and to-day, may Thy people rejoice in Thy Name, and Thy saints triumph in Thee, and grant that whatever cares or burdens or sorrows have accompanied any of us into Thy presence, the burdens may roll away, and the cares may cease to gnaw, and the sorrows be stanched,

and in some measure begin to heal because we hold fellowship with the Father. Let Thy mercy be upon us, great as our hope is in Thee, and do Thou teach us to enlarge our hopes by the very abundance of Thine answer, exceeding all that we can ask or think.

We pray Thee to help us, in Thy mercy to receive and bless us, and to be with us and help us now, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CII

O LORD! Thou art the Father of our spirits, and to be in subjection to Thee is to live. Help us then, we pray Thee, with no reluctance as to an inevitable decree, but with lowly love, as to a Father's purpose, to accept all which Thy paternal care sends upon us. Surely Thou makest the light and Thou makest the darkness, and when our day darkens Thou art still its Light. Draw near, then, to us, we beseech Thee, that in all our changing circumstances we may be of good cheer as knowing how gracious are Thy purposes, and how deep the furrows which Thy ploughshare makes in our hearts. The more abundant will be the peaceful fruits of righteousness unto us if we are rightly exercised thereby. Help us, we pray Thee, in this peaceful faith to labour, and if it be Thy will, to endure. And strengthen us to follow with silence through all changing circumstances by which we can see the Lord in the midst of our darkness.

And do Thou at this service breathe into the heart and mind of the speaker some message that shall be fit for each of us, and shall bring peace and power, conviction and rebuke, where we need them, and strength and grace for all our duties unto each of

us in this hour of worship. O Lord! in like manner, we pray Thee, pour out Thy great influences upon all Christians this day, and upon all Thy hidden ones, who, far from brotherly fellowship, may be seeking God, and alone flying to the God Who dwells alone. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst prosper all the work of Thy servants in every church, in every land, and may all the tongues of earth soon be swelled and enriched by setting forth the praises of the One Father. Prosper their work, and make it more worthy to be prospered. May the work of our hands be Thy work, and upon us and our brethren establish Thou it.

Comfort all sad hearts amongst us, O Lord! whisper Thy gracious messages of peace and patience to all that are tried and troubled. Give Thy servants grace rightly to use all their sorrows, and bring to each of them, in Thine own good time, the gracious results which Thou hast in view in all Thy chastisements.

We beseech Thy blessing upon our Sovereign, and all rulers of every land; grant that throughout the world the perturbations of nations and the vicissitudes of affairs may be overruled to hasten the coming of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

And now we pray Thee to cast Thy hand about us and to bless us in this hour of worship, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

CIII

O Lord! we bow with thankfulness before Thee, and would pray Thee for help to rise to the blessedness of that great assurance that Thou art Love. For all the wonders which Thou hast revealed to us in Christ, the Heart of God, we desire to bless Thee now.

And the more we think of our own unworthiness, of our own coldness, and waywardness, and manifold wanderings, the more we would turn away from ourselves, and sink into the depths of God, and feel that in Thee is all our confidence and hope.

We thank Thee, O Father! for the daily benefits to which Thou hast intrusted some portion of the great work of declaring Thy Name to our too careless hearts. But we bless Thee that their weaker voice is lost in the mighty and sweet voice of Him Who is the Word of God, and speaks to all our hearts as Nature and Providence can never do. We bless Thee for a love which pardons and restores; for a love which does not turn away from us who have turned away so often from it; for a love which hopeth all things concerning all of us, and is not easily provoked nor soon angry. And we beseech Thee that that continual and patient good of Thine may overcome our evil, and that the coals of fire which Thy benefits have heaped upon us may melt our hearts into answering love. Lord! we would come to Thee now, lowly and yet confident, acknowledging our evil, and falling back on Thy great mercy. We come beseeching Thee that some spark from the great fire of God may light in our cold hearts, and kindle their flame, which shall return to its source in holy love and constant praise. We beseech Thee that we may, in the fulness of Thy great Revelation, walk in the light, and be turned into that Light in which we can walk. We pray that the power of evil, and the love of everything that is contrary to Thee, may be broken in our hearts. We pray Thee that all our purest and most faithful service of glad obedience may be set in motion by the impulse of Thy great love to us. We beseech Thee that, compassed therewith,

we may live, in sorrow and in joy, amidst duties, in enjoyments and difficulties and discouragements as always sure of Thy heart, and so able to dispense with anything besides.

Purge us, we pray Thee, from all our evil. Let Thy Holy Spirit dwell within us and work within us. We would submit to His gracious conviction of sin, we would clasp to our hearts His gracious revelation of righteousness visible for us. We would bow ourselves before the revelation of Judgment, and ask that it may be anticipated in each of us, and that we may thereby be separated from the sins which would separate us else from Thee. Give us Thy blessing on our worship, that we may all feel that we are drawing near to God, and that the outward influences in this form of service, and the man's voice, may not stand between us and Thee, but rather may help us towards Thee.

O Lord! accept our praise for every blessing of Thine hand, and of Thy providence, and help us to accept all which Thou dost send as the very best thing for us each.

We pray Thee to take us into Thy gracious keeping now, to forgive our many transgressions, and to grant us the light of Thy face and the joy of Thy felt presence in our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CIV

O Lord, our Father Almighty! may we walk in that Heaven upon earth which comes to them who love God, and in Him their brethren also. Deliver us, we pray Thee, from all the chains of selfishness, from all

forgetfulness of Thee, from all indifference to others. May Thy life be perfected in us, and may we be in the world as Christ, as Thine own Incarnate Word and Love. O Lord! quicken us by the sense of the greatness of Thy mercy to us, and the greatness of Thy requirements from us, and may we neither fall beneath the height of the great things which Thou dost give by any slackness of our faith, nor beneath the height of the great things which Thou dost require by any sluggishness of our obedience. Help us to be, in our measure and degree what Thou hast revealed to us that Thou art, and may the joy of possessing Thee, and the clear vision that our hearts have of Thee, lead more and more to our being changed into Thine own likeness.

O Lord! help us, we pray Thee, that beholding the glory of the Lord we may be changed by Thy Spirit into the same glory. And may we walk in love, and in this world set forth something of the brightness of God. O Lord! Look upon us, needing Thy help, and, we hope, with some feeble desires seeking after it, and with some tremulous faith trusting that we shall not seek in vain. Hast Thou not called us to seek Thy face, and by the call hast not Thou pledged Thyself that Thou wilt not hide Thy face from us? Draw near to us, then, we beseech Thee, and however unworthy we are to make such petitions, and however little or ill prepared for the reception of Thy highest gifts, grant that some message from Thine own Sanctuary may find its way into heart, conscience, mind, and will this morning, and thereby may we be capable of receiving the fulness of Thy highest gifts.

O Lord! bless the ministration of Thy truth amongst us. Grant that with all our unworthiness and unfit-

ness, and however imperfect and unlimited may be our conceptions of Thy great word, and however feeble our grasp of it, and still more feeble our representation and reflection of it, there may yet sound, in our poor words this morning, the message that vindicates itself, and declares its own Divine origin. We pray that Thy truth may be made more precious to each of us, and that our lives may be brought more under the great influences thereof by our gathering together to-day. Whatever diversity of condition or circumstance we, Thy servants, have come from, into Thy house of prayer, may we all find the things that we need here this morning, and be taught out of Thy inexhaustible fulness and infinite variety of gifts and lessons, the lesson that we may most require.

We pray Thee to regard very tenderly any of us who may be in any sorrow, and since there never gathered together as many as are here assembled without there being many sad and anxious hearts amongst them, O Lord! may we all, and especially those of us who may especially need it, find Thy grace sufficient for us, and Thy strength made perfect in our weakness; and be able to bear whatsoever Thou dost send, in the assurance that it, too, hath the peaceable fruit of righteousness hidden within it, if only we are rightly exercised thereby.

We pray Thee to bless us day by day in our various occupations and conditions, to guide us all by Thy counsel, and to make us willing to hear Thy word. May we dwell so near Thee that the glance of Thine eye shall be sufficient for our guidance; and not be as the horse or the mule, which need bit and bridle, and whip and spur, else they will not obey their masters.

We beseech Thee to guide all Christian people gathered together to-day as we are. The Lord be with the many thousands of Israel, and bless them whoever love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and are gathered together in the Name of both their Lord and ours.

We commend to Thee our Sovereign, our rulers, all persons who influence thought or action in the nations of the world, and beseech Thee that the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, which brings peace and every blessing, may spread through the earth, that men, gathered round the One Shepherd, may lose their hostilities and be one flock.

We pray Thee to hear us now, to lift up upon us the light of Thy countenance, and to give us Thy blessing as we are assembled together; for all that we ask is in the Name of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CV

Lift our hearts, and open our lips, O Lord! we beseech Thee, that we may indeed bring to Thee

> 'Thanks without ceasing,
> And Infinite love,'

and show forth Thy praise with glad hearts and tongues. Thou hast crowned Thy loving-kindness to us in that Thou hast given to us that Saviour Who died, and lives at Thy right hand. And on this day of Resurrection we would draw near to Thee with joyful and trustful hearts, and claim our portion in that everlasting and glorious life which Jesus has in His hands to give.

Clothe our souls, we beseech Thee, this day with the garments of righteousness, and in the holy attire befitting Thy priests. Help us to draw near to the

altar, and there offer by the might of the Great Sacrifice our incense of adoration and praise. Blessed be Thy Name for all Thy mercies to us, individually and collectively. This morning we would desire to thank Thee for Thy good gifts to us, as a congregation of professing Christians; and pray that the past may be more than repeated in the days that are yet to come. For Thy preserving care over us we desire to bless Thee, and now that we are joined together again in Thy service, and in the common joys of our faith, we beseech Thee that upon us as a worshipping people there may be poured more abundantly than ever the Spirit of grace and supplication that we may be indeed Thy witnesses, and that this church may be as a light shining and pointing many to the Cross of the Saviour. The Lord be with us all individually, and grant to us as a community the light of Thy countenance, and the presence of Thy favouring and furthering grace.

We bless Thee for every gift Thou hast bestowed upon us in our daily lives. We pray that any of us who may this morning have come into Thy house with any special burden of anxiety, perplexity, or sorrow, may find that it is no vain thing to call upon the Lord Who daily beareth the burdens that we trust to Him. We pray Thee to help us in all our ways to acknowledge Thee, and in all our lives to feel the blessed touch of Thy sustaining Hand, and the sweet influences of Thy quickening and hallowing Spirit, blending with and elevating our spirits.

Grant us, we beseech Thee, this morning, in our worship, Thy help and presence. Guide us in all our ways and thoughts. Grant that upon us, and upon the whole Israel of God, gathered this day to worship the One Father, in many lands and tongues, the grace

of the Lord Jesus may abundantly rest. Cleanse our hearts from all their evil, enlighten our understandings and deliver us from all error. May our beliefs guide our conduct, may our faith kindle love, and 'love be the fulfilling of the law.' Bless us each, according to our diverse necessities, accept our thanks for Thy manifold mercies; and now be near us to help and quicken us in our service, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CVI

O Lord, our gracious Father! open Thou the eyes of our understandings and of our hearts, to perceive and to receive Thy great word of mercy in Jesus Christ. May our faith work through love, and make us, by the indwelling of Thy gracious Spirit, righteous before Thee. Cleanse, we pray Thee, our hearts, and deliver us from all evils of thought and desire, and help us to yield to Thy will to obey the solemn call to be saints. Hallow our hearts; cleanse away all their evil. May we be separated unto God, and, belonging to Thee, belong to ourselves. Do Thou deliver us from our own weaknesses, from all the faults of our characters, from the temptations of our avocations and circumstances, from everything that would come between us and the full possession of Thy grace, and the full conformity to Thy holy will. Day by day may we grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. May there be none amongst us who 'that for the time we ought to be teachers' still need to be 'taught the first principles of the oracles of God.' May we all be men in Jesus, growing up unto Him in all things, Who is the Head, and being filled with His Spirit, 'according

to the measure of the fulness of the gift which is in Him for us all.'

We pray Thee to hear us as we ask for Thy blessing on our services of this morning. We would desire to commend to Thee the work of Thy servants throughout the world, in spreading the Name which is above every name. Grant that there may be poured over us, and over all our brethren, a larger spirit of consecration and more of the mind that was in Jesus, Who looked upon men in their sins and sorrows, and gave Himself for them. The Lord bless all faithful men in every communion who are trying to make Christ known unto their brethren, and so to carry out His purpose, who declared Thy Name unto His brethren.

We beseech Thee to look upon us now, to accept our praise for all Thy great gifts to us, to make us less unworthy of Thy manifold mercies, and to grant on all the services of this day the conscious help of Thy Holy Spirit. O Lord! hear us, accept our thanks for Thy manifold mercies, and receive our poor acknowledgments, and do Thou interpret our prayers according to Thine own higher wisdom and fuller love; and give us the things which Thou knowest we need rather than those which in error we may desire; for our Saviour Christ's sake.

CVII

O Lord, our gracious Father! to Thee we would come in the name of Jesus Christ, and claim our portion in that triumphant life which He possesses and bestows. We thank Thee that even whilst we are on this side of death and the grave we may be partakers of Christ's Resurrection. We bless Thee for all the manifold

powers that are laid up in that great fact on which all faith and hopes are built. We thank Thee for the light which sheds into the darkest and the remotest spaces whither men can go. We thank Thee that this brightness is not only poured upon the darkness of death, but shines amidst the shadows of earthly life, and we pray that we may each of us to-day possess the life within our spirits which is the beginning and the seed of the life eternal in the Heavens. May we, too, count ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive to God through Jesus Christ our living Lord. May we in Him rise above all the death of earth and sense and sin and self, and live *the* life. May the life of God be in our souls, and from that fountain of life which is with Thee may we to-day drink and possess life eternal.

O Lord! look upon us this morning, desiring, we trust, to seek Thy face, and bringing ourselves to Thee with thankful surrender, and longing that we may possess Thee more and more, and be more possessed by Thee. We bless Thee for every benefit received at Thy hand. The eyes of all things wait on Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou givest us the better food which Thou hast made us to long for. But we praise Thee, too, for the lesser gifts of Thy hands, and extol that gracious Name Whose tender mercies are over all His works. We would bow before the majesty of Thy greatness. We would draw near, attracted by the greatness of Thy mercy and compassion. We would bow ourselves with submissive wills as the subjects of that Kingdom which is an everlasting dominion, and consists in the giving of Thyself to Thy children, and in the bowing of our hearts to Thee in thankfulness. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us day by day in all the variety of condition and

character which we present, and possess, to make Jesus Christ more and more our Solace and our Companion, our Pattern and our Power. We thank Thee for every good gift of Thy hand; we would recognise Thy great mercy in Thy small bestowments, and we pray that the things seen and temporal, by which Thou dost often introduce the great message of Thy love to us, may be precious to us, not only for their own sakes nor by reason of the passing delight and satisfaction which they may bring, but because they help us to apprehend more fully the Unseen and Eternal love of the Infinite heart of God.

O Lord! be near each of us as we may severally require. Speak in our hearts, and, if it please Thee, speak through our lips, and let Thy word be to each of us what Thou dost mean it to be, the medium of Eternal Life. We pray Thee to hear and to accept us, for our Lord Christ's sake.

CVIII

O Lord, our gracious Father! we thank Thee for that great and wondrous love of the Saviour Who has bowed us low to help us. And we beseech Thee that, deep in our hearts and influencing all our lives, may be His pattern, and that we may inherit the blessedness of those who do what they know. How much we know! how little of it rules in our lives, and comes out in our actions.

Forgive, we pray Thee, the coldness which has been contented to think that we believe Thy great Revelation of Thyself in Christ, and has so brokenly tried to imitate that in which we say that we trust. May Christ be known more and more to each of us, not only our Hope

but our Life; not only our Example but our power to realise it. May He be all to us, and in Him may we live, and like Him may we growingly live. Help us, O Lord! to be in earnest in the endeavour to be conformed to the image of Thy Son. To this end bless, we beseech Thee, all our gathering together as now, and be with us this morning that our thoughts and hearts may turn to Thee, and that we may all get the message that we most require. Thou knowest how very diverse are our necessities, arising from circumstances, and temptations, and characters, and duties. We beseech Thee that whatever may be the variety of our condition and need, we may all find in that Infinite Oneness our all-sufficiency, Christ. And grant us, we pray Thee, in speaking of Thy truth this morning, the help that we say we need; in order that our message may not be feeble, and marred by human weaknesses and limitations. O Lord! widen our thoughts to the extent of Thy great Revelation, and touch our hearts with the tenderness of Jesus, that all our words may be in Him as well as of Him, and by His grace may be carried to all our hearts, and there bring forth fruit.

We commend one another to Thy gracious care, beseeching Thee to give to each of us the portion that we daily need for our daily tasks, and we ask that whilst we have 'the matter of a day in its day,' we may be able to leave to-morrow in Thy gracious hands, having done our best to shape it as Thou wouldst have it to be. And do Thou help us to rest upon Thee peacefully, and free from gnawing anxiety of all kinds, because we are sure that God careth for us.

We pray Thee to bless any amongst us who may have any special difficulty in reconciling their present circumstances with their faith in a loving Father; and

whatever the circumstances may be may the faith not falter in us. Help us all to be sure of God's love, and to live therein compassed about as by a wall of fire that keeps all real evil off us.

We pray Thee that Thou wouldst remember all Christian people and their work for God. The Lord multiply and purify the efforts of His servants, and help all who love Jesus Christ to feel and to discharge the responsibility thereby laid upon them. May the Church of Christ be liker its Master. May all its servants be as little images of Him in the world, shining as lights kindled from the central Light, and holding forth the Word of Truth. O Lord! accept our thanks for all Thy mercies, and grant us Thy gracious presence and help in our worship, for Christ our Saviour's sake.

CIX

In that 'great name of Love,' O Lord! we would draw nigh to Thee and bless Thee that in Christ's face we see Thine. We beseech Thee that the Light of the glory of the knowledge of God in the face of Christ may be shed into all our hearts now. Draw us, and we will run after Thee; teach us desires which Thou in Thy grace dost always fulfil. Open our lips that we may show forth Thy praise; and let the anointing of the Holy One come upon all our heads, and the touch of the live coal from the altar purge the lips, and open the hearts of hearers and of speaker.

Be with us now, and evermore grant us Thy gracious help and presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CX

LIFT our hearts, O Lord! we beseech Thee, to Thyself now; and if there be anything in us that draws a veil between us and Thee, help us to put it away if it is our fault, and do Thou take it away if it is beyond our power. If care or sorrow, joy or sin, are between us and Thee, help us to leave all these behind and beneath us, and to come into blessed and quiet touch with God. We thank Thee for the recurrence of this day, and that our feeble faith is helped by thus gathering together, and that associations and memories and sense are enlisted in Thy service for once. And we pray that Thou wouldst strengthen each of us this day, not only in our hour of public and formal worship, but in all the moments of the day that God may be in them all, and we may be in God. Compass us about, we pray Thee, with that strengthening and blessed assurance of Thy presence and Thy help; and speak Thy gracious words —which it is impossible for human lips to utter—in the depths of each heart.

O Lord! we come to Thee because we have none else to come to. We are driven by our necessities; blessed be Thy Name! we are drawn by Thy mercy. Thou hast shone on earth in the face of Jesus Christ; may the light draw each of us. May our hearts rest on the finished work of that great Saviour. May we not only know that He has died for us, but feel that He lives in us; and thus may our lives which we live in the flesh be lived by the faith of the Son of God.

O Lord! we thank Thee that Thou hast gathered us together thus this morning; and now that we are here we pray for Thy blessing to come on this congregation; and that each of us may go forth to the work of

another week, and the unknown circumstances of it, strengthened, calmed, purified by our worship this morning. We beseech Thee that Thy blessing may, in like manner, attend all assemblies of Thy saints. Bring us all more closely together, teach us to depend more upon the one common Lord, and to fight more bravely for the one Captain. Let Thy life be manifested more and more in all our churches, and may we be able, in our various degrees, and as Thy providence opens to us opportunities, to live witnessing for Jesus Christ our Saviour.

We pray for one another. Thou knowest all the variety of character and condition gathered here this morning. Be Thou near each heart, O Lord! comfort all sad ones; fill empty places. May we in our sorrows hear the great voice that says, 'Come up higher!' and may none of us have that worst of all afflictions, an affliction that does us no good. Help us whilst we weep to remember Him Who promises to wipe away all tears from off all faces, and in our sadness may we find the sweetness of God. Help us in our daily work; may we adorn the teaching in all things. May we live manifestly before men's eyes as those who seek a Kingdom. May it be plain that we have a loftier standard than men around us, that we live by a mightier and a holier power, that we aim at higher objects, that we are attending to the heavenly Kingdom. And equip us, we pray Thee, by Thy grace, for all the varieties of service and circumstance which Thou dost appoint for us. Bless, we beseech Thee, all work done by Christian people and communities for Thy great Name. Especially have regard to that great enterprise the interests of which are in our minds this day. The Lord bless all His missionaries; and grant that we may

be able, in brotherly fashion, to rejoice in each other's joys and successes, and to sorrow in each other's failures and disappointments. Be with all converts rescued from darkness, and yet scarcely habituated to the blaze of the light. And grant, we beseech Thee, that they may become shining examples of the power of Christ's Cross to uplift all men.

O Lord! remember our country and our Sovereign, and all that are in authority and influence, in this and other lands. Hear us when we cry to Thee; give us Thy gracious help and blessing in our hour of service. Speak through us so that we may all hear; and let Thy Name be glorified through all our worship this day, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CXI

O Lord, our gracious Father! our glorious King! Thou art our sure Defence, and from Thy lavish hand countless gifts flow down to us. Surely goodness and mercy have followed. Blessed be Thy Name! we can generally forecast Thy future and say, 'Surely goodness and mercy *shall* follow us all the days of our lives.' So, Lord! we would come to Thee with peaceful hearts, and pray for grace to help us that we may desire the best things most, and that we may seek after the light of Thy countenance, to walk in it all the day long, that so there may be no darkness at all for us. Thou knowest the things we have need of before we ask Thee. We bless Thee that Thou art willing to give them ere we are willing to accept them, and that Thine own eternal love, or ever the earth was, hath purposed to bestow upon the creatures of a day, as we are, as much of the riches of Eternity as Thou hast made us

fit to hold. We come to Thee to claim from Thee, lowly and yet confidently, the fulfilment of Thy great words, and the continuance and completion of Thy great deeds of loving-kindness and truth to us. We thank Thee for all the mercies that have trickled down to us from the fountain above. And we beseech Thee that, in larger abundance, according to Thy knowledge of what is best for us, these Thy benefits may be bestowed upon us until we come to the land where in their fulness they shall flood our souls. O Lord! give us day by day strength for daily cares, sorrows, and duties. Help us rightly to apprehend Thy daily providences with us. May we not lose sight of Thee in the smallness of the events that befall us. May we never be so deceived by the commonness of our earthly engagements and occupations as to lose sight of the Divine brightness that may shine upon us through them. May all the crooked things be made straight for us, the rough places plain, and the commonplaces of habit be sufficient by the thought of Thy continual will coming forth towards us, and of Thy continual presence in all the prose of our daily life. We would draw near to Thee this morning with especial supplication that Thou wouldst help us and bless us in our worship to-day. Thou seest how much of what is good in us may have been weakened and worn by another week of work, which, not by Thy providence but by our own weakness, has often proved unfriendly to the growth of the best things in us. And we pray Thee that in so far as this has been the case with any of us, Thy refreshing and quickening Spirit may be granted to us now that we may be able to shake off the stains and evils of earth, and to draw near to Thee with clearer vision of Thyself, with a fuller understanding of

Thy purposes concerning us, with a truer estimate of what life is, and is worth, and is meant to do by us, and with the ardent desire springing again in our souls that we may have the fulness of God to abide in our hearts, and to be our joy, our peace, and our strength. O Lord! help us in our worship to-day, and speak Thou when we try to speak in Thy Name. Breathe upon all our hearts the Spirit of grace and of supplication; and may we cherish and be glad to cherish the desires which Thou art so glad to answer and satisfy. Give us, we pray Thee, true access to Thee when in outward form we pray. May grateful hearts make music on our lips in Thy praise; and may the word of the Lord, even though it filters through a man's words, have free course and be glorified among us. We beseech Thee to grant to each of us Thy blessing according to our diverse necessities, and to accept us as we come to Thee now, in and through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CXII

O Lord, our God! we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst give us Thy Holy Spirit more and more in our hearts, that we may be able to fulfil the gracious commandments to pray evermore, to rejoice without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. Help us that we may not thwart the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us, and strengthen us, preserving our whole body, soul, and spirit, blameless until the coming of the Lord Jesus. Purge us, we pray Thee, from all our evil; and may the blood of Jesus Christ, which is the life of Jesus Christ in our hearts, cleanse us from all sin daily. We beseech Thee that we may be coming nearer to

Thee, and knowing more fully the power of Thy hallowing touch.

We draw near to Thee now with petitions for all in Thy presence; especially would we pray for any among us who may have special need of Thy grace to comfort or to enlighten or to restrain. If any of us are in slippery places where our feet are wellnigh slipping, and all but overcome by some strong temptation, O Lord! help us, we pray Thee, and set our feet upon a rock, and establish our goings that our footsteps slip not. If any of us are weighed upon by heavy tasks and burdens, and seem to be pressed out of measure and above our strength, do Thou draw near to Thy servants, and by giving them peace in their hearts, make them more able for their hard work. And if any of us are weighed down by heaviness and pressed upon with sore distress, do Thou graciously comfort and succour such, and reveal Thyself as what Thou surely art, the God that beareth daily all the burdens of His children. May they each be able to say, Be Thou my strong Rock, for Thou art my Rock.

We pray for all Christian people, for all the churches of Thy saints, for all good men and women who are trying to help their fellows in every fashion and department of life. We pray that Thy children, to whom Thou hast committed the task of witnessing for Thee in the world, may lay their responsibility to heart, and may set themselves to discharge it. We beseech Thee that all Thy people may be touched with the live coal from the altar, laid on their lips, and by the grace of the fiery finger of Thy burning Spirit in their hearts, that they may be as flames of fire in the world, and as lights that shine, and cannot but be seen.

We commend to Thee our Sovereign, our country,

and all its interests in all lands, and beseech Thee that these may more and more coincide with Thy interests, and be in the furtherance of Thy purposes.

And now, O Lord! we pray Thee to accept us; grant us Thy blessing in our worship this morning, answering our petitions and taking ourselves into Thine arms and to Thy heart; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXIII

O Lord! we bless Thee that He that is our God is the God of salvation, and that Thou dost delight in giving life, and all possible blessedness to all Thy creatures. We would come and thank Thee that Thou hast made us capable of receiving Thyself into our spirits. And we pray that we may never shut the doors of our hearts against Thy blessed entrance. We would open wide the gates, and pray that the King of Glory may come in. Fill Thou our spirits with the light of Thy presence and the joy of Thy countenance. And grant us, we pray Thee, day by day, a deeper and more continuous and more powerful and transforming consciousness that God is with us of a truth, and may our profiting appear unto all men. O Lord! let not our religion, we beseech Thee, manifest itself only to ourselves in moments of high communion with the living God, but may it be plain to all who have to do with us that we have meat to eat that the world knows not of. Shine Thou into our hearts that our darkness may be turned into flashing light; and may the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ be reflected even from us. Purge us, we pray Thee, from all our sins. The mirror in which we ought to image

Thee is very broken, and in many places very dark. But we pray that in 'Thy light we may see light'; and not only see, but throw back and reflect the light that we see.

Bless us as we are here before Thee this morning. Some of us have come with burdens and care; some perchance with sorrows as well as anxieties, all of us with blessings, all of us with the deep need for Thyself. And we pray that we may have each the special gifts that our present condition may make the most needful for us, and that great gift which has all manifoldness of application for all diversities of necessities, the gift of itself in Jesus Christ Thy Son. We plead with Thee, O Lord! not for our sake, but for Thine own Name's sake, and beseech Thee that since Thou hast deigned to declare Thyself the Lord Who hath pity, and the God of Salvation, Thou wouldst look upon us, Thy poor sons and daughters, as a faithful Father pitieth His children, and that Thou wouldst give us as the fathers of our flesh do, the good things that we need. Nor would we draw ourselves away, O Lord! from Thy fatherly correction, but pray that in whatever shape it comes to us, we may be patient and—yea!—very thankful for what Thou dost with us.

O Lord! bless all who may be upon our hearts now. Draw near to them, and give them more of Thy gracious purposes, and according to Thy rich treasures. Hear us when we come to Thee; forgive our sins, which are many; let Thy mercy be upon us as our hope is in Thee. Hear us in these supplications, which we bring, not trusting to their earnestness, but relying upon Him Who maketh intercession for us before the Throne of God, even Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

CXIV

O LORD, our God! keep us from mocking Thee, either by coming to Thee with feigned words and outward reverence when the heart is far from Thee, or by thinking that Thou art not the righteous Judge Who will render to every man according to his deeds. We bless Thee that we can draw near believing that our Judge is our Father, and lifting up our confidence to Thee through Him in Whom Thou art well pleased. Give us the simple trust in Thy great mercy which shall give us boldness in the Day of Judgment. May we be in the world as Christ is, that when we pass through the world we may go where Christ has gone. We trust we are here this morning seeking Thy face, though not with the earnestness of heart-desire with which we should seek it. Yet, Lord! be pleased to manifest Thyself even to us, and make us ashamed of our imperfect desires and scanty measure of Thy possible grace by the largeness of Thy answer. Thou art wont to surprise Thy people with the over-measure which Thou dost deal to them. And Thou canst do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. We pray that our petitions and expectations may be surpassed by the real largeness of Thy gift. O Lord! help us in our worship. Help us to lift up thoughts and hearts to Thee. Help us to shake off the oppression of absorption in earthly things. May we see a little more clearly than we often do see, amidst the smoke and toil of the week, the sky and the stars.

We pray that Thou wouldst teach us how to speak Thy word this morning. Give us some message which may come home to each of us as a word in season for us, however weary we may be. May Thy grace be

poured out upon all good people, to make them better; upon all Christ's followers, to make them tread more closely in His footsteps; and upon the whole Israel of God.

We pray for all whom we should remember at Thy Throne; for our Sovereign and our Royal Household called upon to pass into the Shadow of Death. We beseech Thee that the lessons which Thou dost read to prince and peasant day by day may be laid to heart by peasant and prince; and that we may all hear the great Voice that calls to us, saying, 'Come up hither.'

And now let the love of God, and the power of Christ's gracious Spirit, be present in our words, and be felt by all hearts; and unto Thy Name be the praise; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CXV

O Lord! Who art high above all praise, we would bow before Thine awful Throne, but we would draw near to Thy loving heart. We beseech Thee that in our service this evening there may be some deep, blessed consciousness of Thy nearness, and assurance of Thy love laid upon all our hearts and minds. Draw us, and we will run after Thee; open Thou our lips, and our mouths shall show forth Thy praise. Lift upon us the light of Thy countenance, and in that light may we see a light which enlightens all things. We thank Thy Name for all Thy mercies. We praise Thee for that goodness which preserves man and beast, for Thy righteousness which is firm as the mountains, for the mighty depth of Thy judgment; and we beseech Thee that we may build faithful confidence on Thy faithful promises, which stand

when the years have rolled away. Be near us in our hour of worship; for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CXVI

O Lord, our gracious Father! we would lift up our hearts to Thee, and pray Thee to help us to-day. Surely Thou dost draw us to Thee by coming down to us, and manifesting to us, in a thousand ways, in every life, how tender and strong, how gracious and wise, how plenteous in mercy Thou art to all. We pray that we may not turn deaf ears to the call that sounds from every corner of Thy creation, and from every part of Thy providence, bidding us seek Thy face. Oh! for hearts to answer, 'Thy face, Lord! will I seek.' 'Hide not Thy face far from me.' We bless Thee for all that Thou hast done for us; but this evening, gathered together thus, we have to think not only of Thy individual mercy to every single soul among us, and of the gracious providences which shape each individual life, but to praise Thee for that world-wide and all-embracing gift which is meant for everybody and contains everything, the gift of Thine own Son to be our Saviour, our Example, our Stimulus, our Friend, our Love, our Hope, our Reward, and our Heaven.

We beseech Thee that all of us here may yield our hearts to that great Saviour, and count it our chiefest honour to be His disciples. May we walk in the narrow way that leadeth to life. May we not be led astray by the many temptations of sin and sense, and to ambition and taste and love that lie round about us. May we hold all lesser good, and do all

work, as belonging to Him, and to Thee through Him; and so may our daily life not be the hindrance to our growth in Christlike and God-pleasing character. May the temptations of our occupations, trades, or professions, or whatever they may be, be neutralised because we do all things, whatsoever we do, to the glory of God, and remembering Him, thus may we find all life eloquent of Thee, and every place a place of worship; and may we be kept from all transgression.

If any of us are in slippery places, tempted to some sin, and losing heart in the struggle, draw near to such, we beseech Thee. And may one effect of our meeting this evening be to send us all out into the world again with renewed courage and determination that, come what will, we will not comply with our weaker selves, and with the evils that would draw us from Thee.

If any of us are in sorrow—and surely in this gathered audience there are sad hearts—we beseech Thee to draw very near to such. Speak some gracious and tender words of the consolation which Thou only canst give. Thy coming makes the darkness light; and Thou canst fill every empty place, and bind up all wounds without hurting them. May none of us who are exercised by any kind of trial be so foolish as to put away the loving Hand that would fain help us to sustain the load; but may we all know what it is to be 'comforted of God, as one whom his mother comforteth.' And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless us gathered here now. Give us some word to speak which shall manifestly have an origin higher than anything on earth; which shall not be ours but Thine. We would cast ourselves on Thy gracious promises, which Thou hast often fulfilled to us in

past times; and pray that it may be given to us in this hour that we shall speak; and that it may not be we that speak but the Spirit of our Father which speaketh in us. Lord! let that great Teacher Who teaches as One having authority come amongst us to-night; Himself teaching us as the truth is in Jesus.

We commend ourselves to Thy gracious care; we beseech Thee to accept our thanksgivings for Thy past mercies; and to grant that our worship may not be devoid of Thy presence and help. Hear us, mercifully forgive all our sins, help us according as our hope is in Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXVII

O Lord! touch our hearts, we beseech Thee, that we may indeed desire to love Thee back again, in some measure, as Thou hast loved us. May our desires truly turn to Thee, manifested to our hearts as well as our minds in Thy beloved Son. And to us may it be true that He is most desired, chiefest amongst ten thousand and altogether lovable. Move Thou upon our spirits, O Lord! draw us nearer by Thy sweet, strong cords of love, and the gracious bands of a man. We thank Thee that Thou seekest to win hearts by the revelation of Thine own heart in our Brother Jesus. And we pray that such insight into Thy gracious Self may be granted to each of us, by much meditating on Him, that we shall never doubt that God is Love. O Lord! fulfil to each of us Thy gracious promises that Thou wilt keep us in perfect peace, and help us to fulfil the conditions and to have our minds stayed on Thee, and our souls trusting in Thee.

We thank Thee for the strong City which we have, with salvation for its walls and bulwarks. Help us to enter in; and, compassed about by Thine own self, may we rest safe from the touch and the fear of any evil. We come with thanksgiving for Thy great and wonderful mercies to us; the least of them is more than we have won by our deserts. Thou dost send them to us in an unbroken stream; and as in Thee is no darkness at all, so in Thy dealings with us there is only pure love. We thank Thee for all Thy good gifts, and pray that we may be taught more wisely to consider those things that we may understand the loving-kindness of the Lord, and not be brought to a stand by any difficulties, sorrows, losses or troubles, but embrace them all in our thanksgiving for all the way by which the Lord our God has led us.

Speak in each heart before Thee now, by Thy gracious influences. O Lord! we feel that we have not brought prepared hearts, as we should, into Thy presence; and that even whilst in outward seeming we are worshipping Thee, our desires and our thoughts are too often diverted to the pressing cares and duties and changing circumstances from which we have come. But we pray Thee that Thou wouldst help us only to remember these, in so far as they may bring us nearer to Thyself, with more earnest desires that we may receive from Thee the needful blessings. And do Thou answer us, and satisfy the longing which Thou Thyself dost kindle in our hearts. Surely Thou hast led us to seek Thy face, by Thy providences, by the voice of Thy Spirit within us, by the very make of our souls, by our necessities and our duties and our joys, as well as by the words of Thy grace and

the message of Thy Son Thou dost call us to seek Thee. Oh! that each of us may answer, 'Thy face, Lord, will I seek.' 'Hide not Thy face far from me.'

Reveal Thyself to us, O Lord, as we each require; and let Thy mercy be upon us, as our hope is in Thee; through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

CXVIII

HELP us, O Lord! that we may possess durable riches and have in ourselves a better and an enduring substance which shall not be taken from us. Teach us in all things to recognise Thy presence, that whether we are rich or poor, happy or sad, it may be towards God. And may we have Thee before us in everything; and make Thee, and our union with Thee, our possession of Thee, and our blessed rest in Thee, the great end of all our life. Deliver us, we beseech Thee, from trusting in that which cannot abide with us. May our love be such as can never be taken from us, being within ourselves and inseparable from our very being. Thus deliver us from the cares and anxieties, from the disappointments and losses which sadden and sometimes break those who set their affections on things on the earth. And teach us the better wisdom of laying up treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break not through nor steal.

Have mercy upon all our weakness, and our inaptness to learn the lessons of Thy grace, and to cultivate the desires which Thou dost approve. And do Thou give us Thy holy help this day that our worship may be very earnest and real, and that every one of us may depart hence strengthened, and the evil in us

weakened, and the good reinforced, by our hour of worship. Do Thou accompany our spoken words with Thy blessing which maketh the poorest words rich. Guide us in all that we may say, and shape Thy message according to the unknown necessities of many souls here. We thank Thee for Thy gracious promises to those that wait upon Thee, and pray that to us, and to Thy people gathered in many lands and communities, and worshipping Thee in the many tongues of this earthly Babel, there may be given the uniting Spirit which shall give to all the one language of Heaven, and shall draw all near unto the Father. O Lord! bless all who seek Thy face this day; be with all who try to do Thy will, or to set forth any part of Thy gracious message and purpose towards men. In all solitary chambers be Thou present, making a little sanctuary to Thy lonely servants. We beseech Thee that in all weary hearts some refreshing drop of God-given consolation may be infused. We pray for all who are tempted or in difficulty of mind, body, or estate, that they may find the blessing of this day of the Lord; this day of Resurrection, this day that brings eternal life near.

And now, Lord! we would commend ourselves to Thy gracious keeping; take away all our unfitness, pass by our unworthiness, speak to us Thine own gracious message, may we have ears to hear the word of the living God. Grant us Thy help and blessing, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CXIX

O Lord! Thy glory fills the heavens, and the earth is full of Thy goodness. We bow before Thee with lowly

voices, and our humble praise which yet we believe is pleasant in Thine ear, and blends with the song of the seraphs. Truly Thou art high above all our creatural limitations and weakness, separate from us, and yet how near Thou art. How Thy love has passed the gulf between us and would draw us to cross it, and to come into fellowship and closest touch with Thee. We thank Thee that we can come so near to Thee, and that in the narrow room of our hearts Thou wilt dwell, and abide with us if we are humble and of a contrite spirit. Make us, we pray Thee, pure, that we may be worthy to be the Temple of the Holy God. And do Thou help us when we come to Thee, not only to think of Thy majesty, of Thy mercy, not only to bow before Thee, the Infinite, hidden Power, but to draw very near to the Father Whom we see in Jesus.

Bless us, we beseech Thee, as we come into Thy presence, needing more than we know, and having more, alas! than we often believe. May Thy fulness fill our emptiness, Thy strength be perfect in our weakness, Thy light illuminate our darkness, and Thy love fire all our indifference, and fill and bless our hearts and lives. To Thee we look in the humble assurance that Thou meanest more kindly by us than we dream of for ourselves. May that faith ever be ours, and in it may we be able to meet whatever dark hours may be sent us, whatever sorrows and losses may enter into our lives, whatever burdens we may have to carry. Blessed be Thy Name! Thou doest nothing but from pure love; Thou doest nothing but by perfect wisdom. Blessed be Thy Name! Thou dost mean to give us more of Thyself, by all Thy gifts and by all Thy withdrawals. Help us, we pray Thee, to understand the loving-kindness of the Lord; and if ever Thy

judgments seem to us a mighty deep which we have no plummets to fathom, nor eyes to scrutinise, may we rejoice in that righteousness which is as a great mountain whose roots are beneath the abyss, and in that preservation of man and beast which gives us plainly to understand Thy loving purpose towards us. Help us this morning to enter into the fulness of Thy grace, and possess something of the assurance of Thy loving care towards us. May we be able to leave behind us anything that may hinder our fellowship with Thee; and do Thou draw near to us that we shall not feel the pressure of earthly cares, as we so often do. Do Thou lift upon us the light of Thy countenance, and help us to enter into the secret place of the Most High, and there may we find the beauty of the Lord, and inquire in His Temple. We would bow ourselves before Thee, and pray that the live coal from Thine altar may be laid upon our lips and upon our hearts, that our iniquity may be taken away, and our sin purged. And we pray that more and more the voice of our hearts may be, 'Here am I; send me.'

Lord! accept us as we bow before Thee now, in Thy great mercy forgive all our infirmities and our sins, and help and strengthen us this morning for Thy service and praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXX

O Lord, our merciful Father! Who hast in these last days spoken unto us by Thy Son, Who hast given us the perfect Revelation of Thy will, and without defect or error hast spoken unto us as Thou, and what Thou, and all that Thou hast spoken unto Him, we beseech Thee

that Thou wouldst give us ears that hear lest at any time we should harden our hearts, and turn away from Him that spake on earth, and now speaketh in Heaven. Bless us, too, with understanding hearts. May we listen to what God the Lord shall speak for us to speak again. And grant, we pray Thee, that this morning we may feel that we have heard the voice to hear and obey which brings life eternal.

O Lord! Thou knowest our hearts; Thou knowest our circumstances. One voice can but partly interpret so many different wants. But we bless Thee that Thou knowest them altogether, and that Thou art infinitely more ready to give to each of us that special gift which for the moment we most require. Blessed be Thy Name! Thou knowest more truly, and seest more lovingly than the dearest and the most clear-sighted can see. Thou dost understand us better than we do ourselves. Thou hast thoughts of God, and not of evil towards us, to give us the expected aid. We pray that Thou wouldst come near each of us according to our diverse necessities now, and shape Thy gifts as we may severally require. Be very gracious to any of us that are in sorrow or trouble. Speak Thy healing words to all wounded hearts. Thou canst pour in oil and wine; Thou canst bend without hurting. There is balm in Gilead, and a Physician there. O Lord! may we in all our sorrows and losses turn to Jesus Christ, and find in Him more than we need, and more than we have ever lost.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst enlighten us as to all our duty; that Thou wouldst guide us by Thy counsel in paths of righteousness, and so make our ways to be paths of peace. Give us wisdom to know what the present moment requires of us, and for

willingness to rise to the height of all Thy purposes, and to discharge all the duties that the hour may bring. Keep us in Thine own love and peace; guide us through all the changing scenes of life; make these contribute to our more secure and constant possession of the unchanging good. We ask Thee that we may be led near to Thyself day by day; and that Thou wouldst do with us in regard of outward things, as Thy wise providence may see best, and that we may not waste any of the discipline, whether of joy or of sorrow, which our Father sends us. And now grant us Thy help without which our words can be neither wise nor strong. Make Thy message prosper in the thing whereto Thou hast sent it; and not return unto Thee void. Hear; forgive; and bless us; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CXXI

O Lord, our gracious Father! draw our hearts to Thyself, we beseech Thee now, and breathe Thy gracious love over us all, that we may not mock Thee with words that mean nothing, nor deceive ourselves by seeming to pray. We would lay hold of Thy strength and rise above ourselves and all the things around us, to touch Thee, and draw power and peace from the touch. We have laid but slack hands on Thy grace; we have given Thee but fragments of our subjection and of our thought. We have followed too much the desires and devices of our own hearts, and we feel that because of the godlessness of much of our lives our drawing near to Thee is but feeble and from afar; and the hands of faith that we would fain lay upon Thee have been laid not. But yet, O Lord! we pray Thee to

answer us in such large measure that we may be ashamed of our small wishes and of our faltering confidence. Give us now some elevating and quickening thoughts and glimpses of Thyself, and of the blessedness that lives round about Thy Throne. And may we come to Thee; Thou hast heard our poor cries in days that are gone by; and we believe that Thou art more willing to give us Thy fullest gifts than we are to ask Thee, or than we are capable of receiving. Enlarge our hearts, we pray; withdraw our desires from the things seen and temporal. Help us this day in our worship that we may indeed enter into the secret place of the Most High, and hold communion with the living God.

O Lord! we bring all our weakness to Thee; Thou shalt look us through and through. There is nothing that we would hide. We know we cannot if we would; we would not if we could. Surely it is blessed that Thine eye sees us. Surely Thou wilt purge away the evil which Thou dost behold. Search us, O God! and know our hearts; try us and know our thoughts. Help us to know Thee that we may not be deceived by any foolish self-love; nor have two standards, one that we apply to the doings of our fellows, and one that we apply to our own. May we weigh ourselves in the balance of the Sanctuary, and try to think of ourselves as we believe Thou thinkest of us; to judge ourselves with righteous judgments.

O Lord! cleanse our hearts from all evil that Thou dost find there, and deliver us from any fond and foolish desires that we set upon things seen, to the exclusion or the weakening of our affections and longings turned to Thyself. Help us to blend Heaven with earth, and God with all things. And whatever we do, however small, however common, however secular—as the world

thinks—it may be, may we link it with Thyself, and impart Eternity to the things temporal because we do them in accordance with Thy will, and with eyes fixed upon Thee; and with the desire for, and the possession of Thy help. O Lord! we need Thee the more the less we feel the need. Be near to us all, we beseech Thee; and breathe Thy gracious influences over us this morning that our worship may have in it what shall be blessed for us. And now, Lord, take away all wandering thoughts; centre our hearts and our minds upon Thyself whilst we wait here in outward seeming before Thee, and let Thy Spirit breathe in our spirits the desires which Thou dost answer, and speak in our spirits the answer which Thou dost give.

We pray Thee to hear us, and in Thy great mercy to accept and bless us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CXXII

O Lord, our gracious Father! we bless Thee that the door into Thy presence-chamber is always open to us, and Thine ear ever ready to hear the least voice. May our ears be ready to hear Thy faintest whisper.

We would come to Thee now with the heavy burden of many wants; some of us carrying a burden of sin that we know not; some of us ignorant of where to find that which shall strengthen us to bear every burden, but all needing Thee. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw near to each of us, and may we feel some aspect of Thy great and infinite character such as we may most require now to be convinced of. Show us Thyself, O Lord, and it sufficeth us, little as we sometimes believe that it does. Make Thyself known to us

as our Wisdom, and our Strength, and our Peace, and our Defence, and our All. And help us to turn away from everything that would draw us away from Thee, or disturb our communion with Thee, or limit our power to receive Thy gifts.

We pray Thee to bless each of us according to our needs and our diverse characters. Reveal Thyself to us as the moment doth most require. Be Light to them that sit in darkness; Illumination to all who may be doubtful as to belief or practice; Strength for those that are feeble, and feel themselves overweighted by tasks or sorrows; Instruction to those that are ignorant; Consolation and Peace to those that are perplexed or at war, or in sadness. Be to each our sufficient Portion, our Wisdom and Strength and Righteousness.

Give us now, O Lord! some message which may have the demonstration and power of Thy Spirit. Thou knowest our weakness and our unfitness to hear or to speak, worthily to set forth and to receive Thy holy Word. But we would trust ourselves in Thy hands, and pray for that Spirit which Thou hast promised to them that wait upon Thee, that we may have given to us the word in season for all, and that we may receive and profit by the message of Thy grace. Pour out Thy holy influences upon us as a congregation of professing Christians. Grant that Thy servants may live their Christianity without ostentation and without hypocrisy, and may so walk before men that they may glorify their Father in Heaven.

Bless all Christian communions and all who, in any fashion or form, are seeking after Thee if haply they may find Thee, and trying to help their fellows in any way to live more worthy of God and of His love.

Be with all Thy people this day everywhere. Let the many prayers that go up rise from faithful hearts and enter into the hearing ear of our faithful God.

O Lord! we commend to Thee our Sovereign, our country, all rulers and persons of authority. Do Thou direct the world as man can not; and hasten the time when the nations, and the kingdoms of this world, shall be the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ.

Look upon us now, O Lord! We pray for all that we have failed to ask. Do Thou mercifully bestow, and answer our petitions, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXXIII

O Lord, our God! Who didst of old suffer one of ourselves to be called the 'Friend of God,' and Who hast given unto us the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, we would draw near in Thy great Name. We thank Thee for all the abundance of confidence, for all the fulness of grace, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which come to us from Him Whose Name is above every name. Help us day by day to walk with Him in Whom Thou art. We pray that our hearts may more and more be brought into fellowship and blessed union with that perfect Love and perfect Goodness, that the Love may solace and calm us, and the Goodness may pass into us and become ours. We draw near to Thee now as children claiming all that is conveyed to us in the great Name, 'Our Father which art in Heaven.' We pray that more and more we may learn to live continually in the peaceful confidence, in the loving obedience, in the inheritance of our Father's wealth, which are made sure to us by such a Name.

We remember how, in the hour of darkness and sorrow, our Elder Brother cried, 'Abba! Father.' And we thank Thee that from His lips we have learned, and by His spirit have been heartened, to repeat that great Name in our hours of joy, of hope, and of fellowship. May we be, and feel ourselves to be, sons and heirs of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And in the truth of that sonship may all our days be passed as in the sunshine. O Lord! accept us as we draw near to claim from the Father's heart and hand the blessings which we severally need. Thou knowest all our wanderings in this great wilderness. Thou knowest the tasks that Thou hast laid upon us, the burdens which we each by Thine appointment carry, and the heavier ones that we have brought upon ourselves by going against Thy appointment and commandments. We beseech Thee to deliver us from these; to give us grace to bear those; and we pray that in all our changing conditions we may have the unchanging assurance of Thy unchanging help and presence.

We are gathered this morning, O Lord! from very diverse conditions and circumstances, and with varying needs. But however different these may be we rejoice that with Thee is all fulness; and thank Thee that the one gift becomes to each of us that which we most require. May it be so with us this morning, and may this hour of worship really draw us all nearer to the fountain of all good, and fill our spirits with the special good which we may most require for the moment. We thank Thee for Thy daily benefits to us; for all the gifts of Thy hand, which we so often use or misuse without remembering whence they come. 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib,' and all creatures the hands that feed them, but we forget

Thee, and do not consider from whence our mercies come. Make us wiser, more thankful, more thrillingly and gladly conscious, at every moment, of the pressure and sustainment of Thy gracious hand, and of the abundance of all kinds of needed good which flow to us from it. Receive us as we come to Thee now, O Lord! and grant us Thy help. Thou knowest how hard it is for us to leave behind us the things of daily concern, and how difficult we find it to enter into that region where Thou dwellest, and to find ourselves in the secret place of the Most High. Grant that no outward forms of worship may come between us and Thee, but may reveal and bring Thee nearer to us. Give to all our worship, in its various parts, the gracious help of Thy mighty Spirit, that thereby all of us may be the better for it. May none of us come into Thy house for the worse.

And now, Lord! lift away every burden, quiet all distractions, concentrate our thoughts and desires on Thyself; open Thy hand and Thy heart, and pour out blessings which Thou dost mean to give when Thou callest us thus to seek Thy face. Hear us, we beseech Thee, and answer and bless us; through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

CXXIV

O Lord, our God! King immortal, eternal, invisible! dwelling in the light which is inaccessible, we draw near to Thee through that Son Who has declared Thy Name; and we bless Thee for the Light which has come to be the Life and the Light of men. May we see light in that great Light, and have nothing to do with the darkness which comprehendeth it not. Shine Thou

into our hearts, O Lord! with the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that we may be light like that on which we look. Give us, we beseech Thee, more and more of the power to become sons of God, believing on the Name of the Son; and knit us more closely to Thee in all loving, childlike obedience and confidence. And may we grow liker and liker the Father from Whom we derive a kindred life.

O Lord! we bring Thee many needs; we thank Thee that in Thee there is fulness infinite. We pray for quickened understandings, for calmer hearts, for more fixed purposes, for a brighter faith, for a more vivid and certain hope, for strength to be and to do what Thou dost command, and to accept what Thou dost appoint. We pray that the likeness of Thy dear Son may be growingly formed and manifested in us, and that all in us which is contrary to Thy highest will may be cast out from us. Strengthen us, we pray, for the daily task of receiving into our hearts more of Thy gracious Spirit, and using it more faithfully for the cleansing and perfecting of our own characters. And help us as we go about our work, that, however familiar, commonplace, and burdensome even it may be, we may always have in our hearts that joyful consciousness which shall make the common things strange and great, and the most familiar duties important; and shall make the crooked things straight, and the rough places plain.

We beseech Thee for Thy help day by day. Thou canst come down to our small tasks, and dost fit us for them. May we regard nothing as small which may tend to make us more like Thyself, and further the discharge of Thy great purposes concerning us.

Help any of us who are in trouble to remember the gracious words which Thou speakest to them that are any way afflicted. And since there never gather together so many as we are now, without many sad hearts amongst them, oh! grant that Thy sweet and strong consolations may come to Thy troubled servants; and that the very darkness may make the light of God shine more brightly. We thank Thee that the Pillar of Cloud by day glows with a heart of fire when night falls. May it be so with each of us when the time comes that we shall have to walk in darkness. And for those of us who may be so exercised now, may the Lord be their Comforter, and the Light of their lives, and their Portion for ever. Help all Thy people to live worthy lives, adorning the teaching in all things. We pray for all Thy servants who are this day engaged in worship, and in the proclamation of Thy truth; and we beseech Thee that, however imperfectly, and however blended with error, the Name of Jesus is magnified, there men's hearts may be drawn to Him, and lives based upon Him be secure, and rooted in Him be fruitful.

We pray Thee to have mercy upon all our unfitness and feebleness, to guide us when we try to hear and to speak Thy holy word, and to let that great and wondrous message of Thy redeeming, cleansing love in Jesus Christ not suffer more than is absolutely necessary by passing through the narrow gate of man's thoughts and utterance. And now we pray Thee to forgive all our sins, grant Thy blessing on our worship, and answer our petitions; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXXV

O LORD! we would come to bless Thee with heart and soul and voice, for Thy mercies endure for ever, and in their continuance and greatness beggar all our thankfulness. To Thee we turn, O Lord! and in Thy ineffable Name we find all that we need. Thou art Light and Peace and Power. From Thee come blessings of every hue and sort. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that fear Him, and to such as keep His covenant. We pray that we may more and more be of such, and in the depths of our hearts may reverence that love which knows no dread, and is full of blessed fear. O Lord! every moment of our lives has a tongue to proclaim Thy praise. Would that our ears were quicker to hear, and our hearts more willing to join in that praise. We look upon our daily lives and experiences, and often feel as if they were dark, and sometimes dreary; and difficulties and problems about ourselves and our brethren press upon us often heavily. But we would cast ourselves on Thy faithful love, and rest in that Name, and believe that all things answer to that Name, and are the gifts and the Revelation of the Father Whose love is often beyond our ken, but always within our faith; and—blessed be Thy Name—open to our experience.

O Lord! let Thy gracious presence come to us, and Thy love be upon us. Thou dost brighten the sky with Thy sunshine to-day; brighten our hearts, we beseech Thee, with the better light of Thy beheld love. May all that is within us bless the Lord, and praise His holy Name. Help us to come to Thee with trustful hearts, and if for any of us gladness may be hard, do Thou teach us that blessed mystery to be always rejoicing,

even whilst we may be in sorrow. Help us to look beyond the moment and its experiences, and to see manifest in everything the one great purpose of Thy redeeming and transforming grace, that we may be partakers of Thy holiness. And thus taught, O Lord! may there be no drawback in our praises, nothing excepted from our song of thankfulness, but all things recognised, and not merely recognised, but felt to be working together for our good. We bless Thee for every gift of Thy hand; we believe that that hand is moved by the same loving heart when it withdraws as when it bestows; when it smites as when it binds up. Help us more and more to live in this love, and to interpret all things by the assured confidence that Thou doest all things well. May we increasingly understand the loving-kindness of the Lord, and meditate on it thankfully as it is manifested in our own lives.

O Lord! cleanse our hearts, we beseech Thee, take from them all that is unworthy of Thee, and contrary to our high calling. May we more and more live as Christ would have lived in our place. May we more and more learn the relative importance of the things temporal and the things eternal. May we be given grace to conquer ourselves, to purify ourselves, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. May we have a growing consciousness that Thou art with us, and working on us; and may our profiting appear unto all men, that they may see by our daily lives that we live by a perfect law, and are helped to live by a perfect Spirit.

Bless our worship this morning, we beseech Thee; grant that this day may be fully charged with blessing to all Thy people, who, in any communion, in any

fashion, and by means of any tongue, seek Thy face and proclaim Thy doings. The Lord look upon us in His great mercy; cleansing us from all our evil, and dwelling in our hearts by faith, that we may be able to 'comprehend with all saints, and know the length and breadth and depth and height of the love' that passes knowledge; that we may be filled with the fulness of God. We can ask nothing more, Thou art willing to give that and nothing less; and we pray that we may not hinder Thy giving by our slackness or fault in receiving. Hear, and answer us; through Christ our Saviour.

CXXVI

HEARTENED, O Lord! by Thy great promises, and resting on that great High Priest, we too would come boldly to what is the Throne of Grace. We bless Thee that we can speak all our heart to Thee with the frankness of children, and lay bare our spirits. We bless Thee that we do not need to shrink from that discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and that it need not be to us a terror that all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do. Thy love, O Lord! is great and perfect as Thy knowledge, and we cast ourselves thereon; and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst indeed look upon our lowliness and cast out from us all the evil which Thou dost discern in us. May Thy presence give power, now, O Lord! to what else has none—our outward gatherings together under forms of worship. May we each feel that we are, in very deed, coming into contact with Thyself, both by our words to Thee and Thy word to us. And do Thou shed Thy grace

upon all our hearts, whether we hear or speak. Deliver us from errors, from imperfection of view, from feebleness of representation, and help us to set forth Thy holy will in so far as it is possible for men to do it, without the admixture of human weakness. And do Thou graciously grant that the message given by Thee, as we trust, may be welcomed by us, and may work its due effects on all our hearts and minds, so that good shall appear in us after many days. Let not Thy service have a mere transitory influence upon us, but may it do something to build up more solidly abiding characters in each of us.

Accept our thanks for all that Thou hast given. Help us in the varying circumstances, and according to the diverse necessities of our present lot. Guide any of us that may be in perplexity. Be the Guide of all that sit in darkness, the Companion of all that are solitary, and the Friend and Helper of every one of us. Draw near to all that love Thee, and shed Thy blessing upon them. Grant that Thy servants may be more truly faithful, and more obedient to Thy will, in all daily life. And may the word of the Lord sound out from the actions and the characters of Thy people, as well as be proclaimed by the lips of some of them. Grant that the witness-bearing which is incumbent upon all Thy professing servants may be discharged by us more faithfully, and that our testimony may be clearer and more consistent in our daily lives.

We beseech Thee to bless all rulers in this and other lands. We pray that Thou wouldst guide the affairs of the nations so as to bring about, in Thine own blessed time, that great Divine event to which all Thy providences point, and which the mission of Thy Son makes possible.

We beseech Thee to reveal Thyself to us as we wait before Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXXVII

O Lord, our God! help us, we beseech Thee, that in simple sincerity and deepest trust we may indeed make Thee the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever. Surely they who put their trust in Thee are made wise to know Thy will, and to declare Thy works. And we would draw near to Thee now, knowing that it is good for us to approach Thee, and that to be absent from Thee is to perish.

We bless Thee for all the daily guidance which Thou dost give us, so that often, amidst the perplexities that darken all life, and the mysteries which we cannot solve, our hearts may rest in the assurance that, in spite of all surface appearances to the contrary, God is good to such as are of a clean heart. May that confidence ever abide with us, and fail not in times of darkness or difficulty in our own lives, as well as when we are looking out upon all this world, so full of sorrow and calamity. Do Thou help us ever to cherish the cheerful faith that all which we behold is full of blessings for ourselves. Lord! win us, we pray Thee, more and more from all creatural delights. Help us to cherish all which we possess in dependence upon Thyself, so that they may never draw us away from Thee, nor conflict with our supreme devotion to Thee. May we have none upon earth that we desire beside Thee, but all our desires, even those which go out to those that are dearest to us, be desires cherished in Thee. Sanctify our love, purify our hearts, chasten

us from all undue and godless affections and purposes, and strengthen us to recognise Thy presence in everything. Surely Thou makest the light that brings sunshine into our days, and dost create the darkness that sometimes stoops upon them. And 'the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee'; Thy ministers to light us nearer to Thyself. May neither of them fail in their mission. May we be led to Thee by all our joys and by all our losses and sorrows.

We thank Thee that we can cast every burden upon Thee, whether it be of duty, of difficulty, or of pain. We pray that Thou wouldst help us that we may never go a warfare at our own charges, nor seek to labour in our own strength, but ever realise the blessedness, the peace, and the power which come from dependence upon Thyself. May we carry thoughts of Thee into everything that we do. May our hearts cleave to Thee amidst all our various occupations, and realise that in Thyself is all which we need. We pray Thee to forgive all misreading of Thy purposes, all our stumblings at Thy providences. Help us, whenever there is anything too painful and hard for us to understand, not to be contented with trying to know about it by thinking, but to go into the Sanctuary of the Lord, and in communion with Thyself to take the true measure of all things, and the true light upon all.

We pray Thee to lead us by Thy counsel, to help us day by day in our various duties and circumstances, to guard us from the temptations of our condition and characters, to lead us in paths of righteousness, and to make them for us paths of peace. We thank Thee for all past blessings, for the mercies of another day; for all the good which Thou dost scatter around us; for all which Thou hast promised to be, and art, to

them that seek to keep Thee to Thy promises. We thank Thee for the past; we thank Thee for the present; we bless Thee for that great future. And we pray that we may so use the things seen and temporal that they may make us more assured and full, in our anticipation and our possession, of the things that are unseen and eternal.

O Lord! we beseech Thee to be with us in this hour, grant us some help and message from Thyself, and speak in our hearts and through the lips of the speaker; and let the word of the Lord run and be glorified among us, whenever and by whomsoever it is proclaimed, and to whatever audience it is preached. Be near all Thy servants who are trying to spread the name of Jesus; and give Thy blessing to every humble, faithful worker in the Master's vineyard.

Give peace and rest, patience and victory; and, in due time, the happiest issue out of all their troubles, by their sorrows, of all Thy people; bringing them nearer to Thyself. Now, O Lord! we pray to be taken into Thy gracious care and keeping. Forgive our sins, and grant us Thy presence and help, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

CXXVIII

O LORD, our gracious Father! we thank Thee that even whilst we draw near to Thee with reverence and godly fear, we can come to Thee as our reconciled God and Father. And we bless Thee that even the thought that Thou art a consuming fire has in it hope and comfort for us that Thou wilt give to them that seek it that fire of Thy gracious Spirit which shall burn up and destroy all our evil, and the bonds in which we are held. We come to Thee, then, O Father! with reverent love as

well as reverent fear, and lift up our hearts to Thee, blessing Thee that we are not come unto blackness and darkness and the sound of terrible words, but can draw very near, and enter into the very City of God, and find our home in Thy presence, and lay our heads upon Thy heart. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst strengthen us all thus to love Thee, to realise Thy presence, and to bear ever about with us through all the varieties and vicissitudes of our daily life the peace-giving and happy thought that our Father God is with us, and that to bless us.

We thank Thee for all the true tokens which Thou dost give us day by day, often unnoticed, often misused, of Thy loving care and wise providence. We beseech Thee that we may have the grace given to us, and may use the grace that is given more and more to correct everything that befalls us in this life, the little things as well as the great, the commonplace and familiar ones as well as the rare and extraordinary ones, with Thyself, with Thy will, with Thy providence. We thank Thee that we do not need to believe in 'special providences,' as if all the rest of our lives were void of God. We thank Thee that Thou art with us always, and that it is Thy holy will that moves all things, and that we can rest in the assurance that we are compassed about upon all sides by Thee. Thou hast beset us behind and before, and it is a wall of fire that Thou castest round about us. Thou hast laid Thine hand upon us, and it is a hand that sustains, and blesses, and gives, that Thou dost lay on us. We beseech Thee, then, that we may ever feel that it is good for us to dwell and keep ourselves always near to Thee as we go about our daily work, of whatever sort it is; may we be able more and more to feel that Thou art with us;

whatever Thy holy providence sends into our lives, either of sorrow or joy, either of difficulty or duties or delights, may we accept all as from Thyself, and in all be able to serve Thee, to love Thee, and to keep our hearts steadfastly fixed upon the end of all.

We thank Thee for the tokens of paternal love which come to us even in sorrow, and clothed in darkness; and we pray that with whatsoever trouble or perplexity any of us are exercised, we may so use it as that it shall yield for us the peaceable fruit of righteousness, and fulfil the great purpose for which all Thy dealings with us are directed, that we may be partakers of Thy holiness. O Lord! be with us this evening; help us to find some word suited to our condition in the message which Thou dost send to Thy churches. Teach us how to speak, and how to hear; we pray that Thy Spirit may manifestly be present with us whenever we gather as a Christian congregation. And we beseech Thee that all who are united here in outward bonds of Christian fellowship and of worship may be knit to the Head, and partake of the life of Jesus Christ. Quicken us, O Lord! and grant that there may be realised among us a far holier tone of Christian living, and a far deeper and more habitual communion with Thyself than have marked us in the past. We pray that Thou wouldst bless us now, be near each; speak Thou, O Lord! through us, in us, and to us; and take away anything that hinders our rising to the enjoyment of all the blessings of this hour of worship.

We pray for the certain measure of prosperity in our outward lives that Thou hast seen to be good for us; and we ask Thee that Thou wouldst help us day by day in all our various duties. Those of us who have special burdens to bear we would lovingly commend to

Thee. If our hearts are sad, be Thou the Comfort of all them that walk in darkness, and have no light. We beseech Thee to draw near to the lonely and the bereaved; speak Thy peace and Thy comfort to all such souls. We commend one another to Thy gracious care, O Lord! We thank Thee for all Thy past mercies to us. Be with us now, for our Saviour's sake.

CXXIX

O Lord, our gracious God! help us to come to Thee feeling that Thou givest all life and breath and all things; and lifting up our hearts to Thee in humble desire, and in peaceful confidence that the giving God will not forget us, nor leave us out in the daily ministration.

We thank Thee for all Thy past mercies to us, and in our thankfulness would pray for grace to embrace all Thy dealings with us, of however diverse sorts they may be. Surely Thou dwellest in the darkness as well as in the light, and Thou sendest the storms that stoop upon our path as well as the sunshine and the calm; and Thou hast made Winter as well as Summer, and the outgoings of the evening as of the morning to rejoice. Help us to recognise Thy presence in everything; in sorrows and disappointments, in losses and difficulties, in anxieties and trials, all which test our faith, and by testing are meant to increase it; all which drive to Thyself, so that we may find Thee a better and an enduring blessedness. So, Lord! recognising that Thou art our Father in the heavens, and that all which Thou doest is for our profit, that we may be partakers of Thy holiness, which is the best good and profit that can befall us.

We would come to Thee with wide thanksgiving, and bless Thee for all the way by which the Lord our God hath led us. Accept us, we pray Thee, as we come to Thee now with a petition that Thou wouldst help us more and more to mould our wills after Thyself, and to submit ourselves to Thee. May there be no recoil or reluctance in us at any of Thy providences. May there be no slothfulness or negligence in us, in regard to any of Thy commandments. May it ever be with us a delight to do Thy will because Thy law is within our hearts; and may we love the law because we love the Giver of it. We come to Thee, and pray Thee to purify our hearts from all in them that may interfere with our true and complete devotion to Thyself. We look back upon our days and see in them many failures, and surely Thou seest far more than we do; and yet we trust that Thy love is unchanging, mightier than all our sin, and not to be turned away by our sin. So we cry to Thee, and beseech Thee that Thy grace in our hearts may more and more prove its conquering power, and that the blood of Jesus Christ poured into our lives, and circulating in our veins, may cleanse us from all sin. May the lives we live in the flesh be lived by faith in the Son of God, Who loved us, and gave Himself for us. Being so loved, may we walk before Thee in all Thy commandments and ordinances blameless.

Help us, we pray Thee, day by day, to fight this good fight of faith; and grant that we may, to our own consciousness, whether to men's eyes or not, and to Thine eye, be always growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To this end, we beseech Thee to bless all our gathering together, and all our other use of the means which Thou hast

provided for us. May Thy word be precious to us. May we be no strangers to the secret place of the Most High. May the gathering together of Thy people minister strength to us, and may we 'not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is.'

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be with us this evening, and in our service now do Thou help us all according to our different circumstances, necessities, and parts, in this hour of worship. To hearers and speaker alike give the varying gifts that they need; and draw us all close to Thyself, and help us all to wait before Thee, for the message which Thy word shall bring to us; and lay Thy Spirit upon all our hearts.

O Lord! we pray that we and all our fellow-worshippers who from time to time gather in the bonds of Christian communion may be indeed united to Thee by the bond of true faith and love. And do Thou pour out upon us, as a church and congregation, more and more of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, that we may live our lives more in conformity with His blessed pattern; and that men may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

We pray Thee, O Lord! to bless each of us, in all the different duties of life, and in our various spheres of service. We thank Thee that however diverse these may be, the motive that guides us all may be one, and the grace that helps us all may be one. And we pray for one another, for any who are in any kind of difficulty, trouble, or perplexity, or sorrow. Draw near in Thy tenderness to Christian hearts, and gently bind up the wounded; for Thou only knowest how to heal so as not to hurt; and Thy consolations never wound nor irritate, as our clumsy ones often do.

We pray Thee to be near all Thy servants; grant that none of them may put away Thy hand, or neglect either the consolation or the instruction of Thy providence and Thy Spirit.

Bless us, and give us Thy gracious help in all our services; whensoever, and by whomsoever, and to whomsoever Thy holy Name is proclaimed, and the salvation of Christ made known, there give the demonstration of Thy Spirit and Thy power.

Hear us in our petitions; forgive our many sins; grant us Thy gracious presence as we bow before Thee, and answer us, for all we ask is through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

CXXX

O Lord, our gracious Father! draw all our hearts to Thyself now. Lift us above all hindrances and impediments that we may truly come into Thy presence, seeking from Thee what we need so much, and as Thou only canst give. We would cast ourselves, with all our weaknesses and emptiness and sin, upon Thy great mercy, upon Thy rich fulness, upon Thine infinite grace, upon Thy boundless promises. And we beseech Thee that whatsoever each of us may need, Thou, in Thy great love, wouldst come unto us, and satisfy our desires, and fill our hearts with Thy grace.

We come to Thee, bearing upon our hearts many weaknesses and many sins. We beseech Thee to cleanse us, to draw us nearer to Thee, that in the strength of fellowship with Thyself we may be parted from all iniquity. Unite our hearts to fear Thy Name, that so they may be separated from all other fears, and all loves that would conflict with our supreme love to

Thee. We bless Thee that when we know our weakness most, and our unfitness, we can then most firmly lay hold of Thy hand. And we pray that Thy gracious presence may be with us, that Thou wouldst help us, recognising what we are, and in some measure what Thou art; to come to Thee now, bringing our whole need to Thee, that it may be submitted to Thy merciful touch, and filled with Thine infinite fulness. O Lord! we pray Thee, reveal to us more our own weaknesses, and any things in us that are contrary to Thy holy will. And help us, day by day, to rise above our former selves, and to put off the old man with his affections and lusts, and to put on the new man, created after Thine own image in righteousness and holiness. O Lord! we cannot offer such prayers without remembering how unlike Thee much of our daily life is. But we beseech Thee that we may never lower our desires to the level of our actions, but may lift our lives to the height of our prayers.

Look upon us as we are here before Thee this evening. We are all the pensioners of Thy bounty, and hang upon Thy hand, and Thy grace is more than sufficient for each and for all. Give it to us, we pray Thee, according to our different circumstances. Help us to use the things seen and temporal by Thy gracious communication of health and strength, so that all our varying circumstances may tend to the one end of bringing out more clearly in us the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord. We thank Thee that Thou hast promised, and hast faithfully performed, to a thousand generations Thy promises. Thou wilt be found of them that seek Thee; and wilt fill the mouths of them that are opened in desire and prayer. Give Thou to us, we pray Thee, that by the largeness of Thy gifts we may

be ashamed of the smallness of our expectations; and enlarge our wishes because Thou hast so abundantly satisfied them. Surely Thou givest to us all more than enough, and of the fragments that are left we may gather up baskets for the future. Help us, we pray Thee, to think as we ought, to think loftily and largely of Thy mercies, and of Thine abundant stores; and to expect great things of God.

We pray Thee to guide us, day by day, in all the variety of our duties and occupations. Help us to bring them all into connection with Thyself, so that whatever we do may really be worship, and our whole lives be filled with communion with Thee. We thank Thee that it is possible to serve Thee in all places, and in a thousand ways. We beseech Thee that we may be able, more and more, to bring our thoughts and our wishes into union with Thy thoughts and Thy will. And though Thy thoughts must always be higher than ours, and Thy ways higher than our ways, may the difference between them not be of opposition nor unlikeness, but of degree.

We pray Thee to give us thoughts, and help us to draw near to Thee; to wait upon Thee with full purpose of heart, and expecting that Thy blessing will come with the ordinances of Thy house, if we humbly seek it, and trust ourselves to receive it. And do Thou graciously teach us some message from Thyself which may be helpful to us, and may go with us in our various duties and occupations day by day. We bless Thee that we can thus gather together. We have come from different kinds of homes and work; and we thank Thee that, however diverse our characters and conditions may be, there is grace and help of the right kind for us all in the one gospel and in the Lord of the gospel. We

pray Thee, then, that Thou wouldst, through the words spoken in weakness, minister of Thy power; and grant to each of us the consciousness of Thy presence and of Thy voice.

We pray for one another, for all our fellow-worshippers, present or absent, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst grant the outpouring of Thy gracious influences upon us as a congregation, more abundantly than in the past; and that we may be less unworthy to receive the tokens of Thy favour and of Thy help. Let the word of the Lord ministered among us, by whatsoever lips, and in whatsoever fashion, to old or young, by preaching or teaching, or any other method, have Thine own manifest approval, and accomplish the thing whereto Thou hast sent it.

And do Thou bless any among us who are in weakness, or sorrow, or trouble. Draw near to us all, in our several perplexities or trials. Show us Thy holy will, and Thy blessed way, and make our paths straight before us. Help us to lift up the feeble hands that hang down; and strengthen the tottering feet. Guide us in the way of righteousness, and set our feet upon a rock, and establish our goings. We pray Thee to hear us, to grant us Thy gracious help, and accept us as we come to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CXXXI

O Lord, our gracious Father! we would lift up our hearts to Thee now, whatever weights or sins may hold and tie them down. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to break all such bonds, and to come up and into Thy presence, and receive into our hearts the full blessedness and sunshine of the assur-

ance that Thou art God, and that Thou lovest and carest even for us.

We thank Thee that we have a great Intercessor before Thy Throne Who is ever pleading for us; and we pray that when our hearts are most conscious of our own weaknesses and sinfulness we may then be most sure that we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. It is in His Name that we come to Thee now, O Lord! and through Him that we look for the forgiveness of our many sins, and for the cleansing of our hearts from all corruption. Regard us, O Lord! here before Thee, as we would confess in Thy presence how unworthy we are of Thy mercies, and yet how confidently we venture to trust that Thou wilt not leave us nor forsake us. Thou hast seen in us what, if Thou wert less than God, Thou wouldst turn away from. But we beseech Thee that though our sins are many, and sometimes, when they take hold of us, we are afraid to look upon them, Thy mercies are more than they, and Thy grace is stronger than the sin that reigns; and Thou art ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon Thee. We would call upon Thee, and ask that we, too, may receive the fulfilment of that great promise. We need Thee, O Lord! to teach us how to be sorry for our sin, and we pray that Thou wouldst work in us that godly repentance which needeth not to be repented of, and that Thou wouldst confirm us in our abhorrence of every evil thing that would draw us away from Thee. O Lord! Thou knowest how weak we are, and how prone to fall we are. We have fallen before, but we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst strengthen us to contend against, and to overcome even the habits of evil-doing which we may not be conscious

of ourselves, and that Thou wouldst strengthen us to love Thee so fully, and to cleave to Thee so entirely, that no sin of any sort may have dominion over us. We pray Thee to keep us back from presumptuous sins, and to cleanse us from secret faults, and so to keep us innocent from much transgression.

Regard us, O Lord! as we are in Thy presence this evening; and let Thy mercy be upon us according as we venture, emboldened by Thy word, to set our hopes upon Thee. Teach us some messages from Thy word which may be profitable for us; and grant that our own experience may blessedly confirm the faithful and gracious promises on which Thou hast caused Thy servants to hope. Surely Thou wilt not deceive the hopes which Thou Thyself hast drawn forth. We thank Thee for the assurance that we have, that we have a faithful God Who keepeth covenant for ever, and never forgets any of the sacred words that have gone forth out of His mouth. May we, then, rest ourselves more and more upon Thee. Do Thou strengthen us, day by day, in all the conflict and course of our daily lives, that our duties may be sweeter and easier to us, that we may learn more and more of the inward blessedness of those who take up their cross daily and follow Christ. Oh! do Thou help us to cleave to Him more closely, and to walk with Him very fully; in all that we do to set the Lord before us.

Deliver us, we pray Thee, from all circumstances which might draw us away from Thee, and when these have done their work upon us in strengthening our hold on Thee, do Thou, if it please Thee, change them for those that may be more favourable; but Thou shalt choose our inheritance for us. We would leave

ourselves in Thy hands; and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst guide us by Thy counsel, and make us willing to accept all the variety of Thy providences, and that Thou wouldst, above all, deepen in us the life of God in our own hearts. Make us more what Thou wouldst have us to be, and what Thou hast made it possible, by the gift of Thy divine Spirit, that we, faithfully using it, should become. Be near us all, in our various circumstances, and duties, and avocations.

Bless any among us who have any burden of sorrow; breathe Thou, O Lord! Thy grace into them, that they may be able to lift up the hands that hang down, and confirm the feeble knees, and to run with patience in the race that is set before them. We pray Thee to bless us all, in our relations as members of a Christian church and congregation; and grant that our meeting together may be for the better whensoever we meet. Prosper all Thy word among us, O Lord! make us less unworthy to be honoured by Thee, as instruments in spreading Thy Kingdom, and may the Name of Jesus Christ be magnified among us, and the power of His salvation more experienced by all of us that meet here from time to time in Thy worship.

We pray Thee to hear us, and grant us Thy blessing now, as we bow before Thee; to forgive our many sins, and to draw near to us in the making this an hour of true fellowship with the Father and the Son, through the Holy Spirit. For Christ our Saviour's sake we pray Thee to bless us and answer us.

CXXXII

O Lord, our gracious Father! to Whom shall we come but unto Thee, for wherever else we go with our

worship and the desires of our hearts we bow before idols which cannot help or profit. We thank Thee for the Revelation that we have, that Thou art the true God, and that eternal life lies in our union with Thee. May we all be knit to Thee, not only by believing that Thou art, but by trusting Thee for what Thou art, and obeying and loving in all our hearts and ways.

We beseech Thee to help us to draw near to Thee in our hour of prayer. We know that we bring with us much that hinders our souls' desires rising to Thyself; duties which Thou dost lay upon us; the cares which are inseparable from our earthly condition; the work of our hands; all these things, without fault of ours, do often crowd Thee out of our minds. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us now to deliver our hearts from the bonds that sometimes hold them, and that Thou wouldst open our eyes to behold the things that are, though we so often lose sight of them amidst the things that seem to be, for the present. We pray that Thy gracious hand laid upon us may lift us to Thyself, and that our true communion now may be with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ. Oh! that we may have that witness in ourselves of which we have been reading, and may feel that our faith rests upon no words of man but upon God Himself.

We thank Thee for the blessed experiences which are given to them that put their trust in Thee, of strength coming to them in their weakness, of wondrous consolations granted to them in their sorrows, of power to do Thy will even when they are less able to do it. And we pray that we may not be left without such tokens that Thou hearest us, and givest us the petitions that we desire of Thee. O Lord! help us to overcome by that might of faith which lays hold

upon Him that overcomes for us and in us. And may we have Christ in our hearts, and know Him that is true, and that we are in Him that is true.

We thank Thee for the opportunity of assembling together and seeking Thy face. We thank Thee for all the circumstances and mercies of another day. We beseech Thee that now we may each be able, and the more able because we are gathered together, to draw near to Thee. We thank Thee that Thou dost approach and answer the solitary petitions of Thy scattered servants. We bless Thee that Thou dost draw near to them when, with one accord, they lift up their voices in supplication to Thee; and we pray Thee that our services may never be without the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, and that we may all feel that in very deed it is no vain thing to wait upon God.

O Lord! help us, we pray Thee, in our worship now. Give us some words to speak in accordance with Thy holy will, that may be helpful and full of blessing to each of us here. We would praise Thee for all Thy past mercies to us as a congregation, and pray Thee that Thou wouldst still be with us and wouldst still bless and guide and light us. And, O Lord! quicken us all that we may become more holy, more simple, more Christlike, more earnest, more meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Be with us in our daily work; whatever we have to do may we do it heartily, as to the Lord; and whatever we have to bear may we bear it patiently, as from the Lord. Do Thou give us light to shine upon our paths, that we may not be at a loss to know what duty is. Do Thou give us hearts to run in the way of Thy commandments when we discern them; and do Thou, in Thy merciful providence, and great wisdom, make the paths of wisdom

to be paths of peace, even though sometimes they may be narrow and rough.

We pray for any among us who may have any particular burdens, or anxieties, or regrets, or sorrows, or contritions. O Lord! for all the troubles of troubled hearts Thy grace is more than sufficient. May it be near each of us, according to our needs; working correction and rebuke where needful; working strength and consolation where these are wanting; working in us all more and more of the image of Jesus Christ.

O Lord! bless us in our worship; forgive our many sins, help us as we wait before Thee, and lift upon us the light of Thy countenance that in that light we may see light. All we ask is for Christ our Saviour's sake.

CXXXIII

Help us, O Lord! we beseech Thee, that we may catch some of that firm confidence and enlarged desire which breathed in the prayer of Thy servant of whom we have been reading. We rejoice to know that the power that worketh in Thy children is fit to make them all partakers of the fulness of God. And whilst we acknowledge before Thee our own weakness and our many shortcomings, we bless Thee that we can still come to Thee believing that Thou dost hear the faint desires that rise from our hearts. Help us that we may indeed draw near to Thee now with the confidence of children approaching the Father, and resting ourselves on Thy great promises may Christ dwell in our hearts by faith. And may we, being rooted and grounded in love, learn, by our blessed experience, to know that love which passeth knowledge, and to

measure the breadth and length and depth and height of its immeasurableness that so all this grace may flow into our hearts, and we be made more than conquerors through the possession of the love of Him Who has overcome.

We beseech Thee to cleanse our hearts from all false affections and desires, to subdue and suppress in us any and every thing that might draw us away from Thee; to give us grace to war against anything in ourselves that wars against our true blessedness. And grant, we beseech Thee, that the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the flesh, and that henceforward we may more than ever live the life of faith, and walk by faith in the Son of God.

O Lord! we need that our tremulous resolutions shall be confirmed, and we need Thy help that the sudden attacks of strong temptations may be overcome. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst draw near to us; abide with us; give us clearer visions of the Unseen. Show us more and more of the fulness of Thy grace and love, and may our hearts be smitten with more earnest desires after holiness and conformity to Thy perfect will. May we be less content with our present attainments, and forgetting the things that are behind may we reach forward to the things that are before. We thank Thee that Thou hast given us the assurance that they who thus run with patience the race set before them shall attain. And we ask Thee that the blessedness of that Heaven which Christ has opened and made sure for us may more and more appeal to us all, be more real to us, and be more of a motive and a power in our lives. We thank Thee that Thou hast by Thy great mercy brought life and immortality to light by the gospel, and that Thou dost

give to each of us the right to cherish a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And we pray that such a hope may be no stranger to our hearts, but in the strength of it may we be able to overcome the temptations which the fleeting things of this life present. And may we be able, more and more, to set our affections on things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.

O Lord! we pray Thy pardon for all our unworthiness and for all our sin. We pray Thee to lift us up from the lowliness of our present lives, and to help us to walk in heavenly places even whilst we are here. Help us to open our hearts and minds for the influence of Thy strength. We need correction; we need building up; we need quickening; we need all that Thy gracious word, in the hand of Thy mighty Spirit, can do for poor souls. And we beseech Thee that we may not wait before Thee in outward form only, but really desire to be influenced in the depths of our lives by Thy message of mercy and love. Do Thou help us to speak some words in Thy Name, and may we all, whether we hear or whether we speak, lay to heart the message which God has for us all. We thank Thee for being permitted to meet together thus this evening; we bless Thee that we can draw near to Thee for all the strength and joy and confirmation of faith that come to Thy servants from fellowship in Christian worship. We pray that our gathering together may always be for the better, because it is always in the Name of Christ. May we bring Him with us when we meet, and find Him here yet more abundantly. Bless us when we depart hence and go back again to our various homes and duties. May we live there under the impression of the power of the world to come. May we show piety

at home. May we adorn the doctrine in all things. May we live as becomes those who seek for the City which hath the foundations, and are contented to be pilgrims and sojourners here below. Do Thou bless us in all our various relations. Give us fitness for our duties. Help us to keep our hearts above our work, and to do everything that we have to do, be it smaller or greater, from the one motive, that we may please Him Who hath called us who may be weak and sad. Speak Thy peace to all troubled hearts. We commend to Thee the mourners and the bereaved. We beseech Thee to bless those who have had to walk through dark waters; and we thank Thee that even in the Valley of the Shadow of Death there is comforting power in Thy rod and staff.

O Lord! bless all our work here in this congregation in preaching and teaching, and in the influence that Thy servants may bring to bear upon those around them. May the word of the Lord run and be glorified among us. May the message of Jesus Christ ever be the theme of our ministrations. And may the Spirit of the Lord go with all that we try to say and do. We commend to Thee all Christian people, in all churches and communities of such, and ask that Thy Spirit may rest abundantly upon all Thy people. Lord! be with the many thousands of Israel; and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be manifestly with all them that love Him in incorruption.

We beseech Thee to hear us; to forgive our sins, and to grant us Thy gracious presence and help in our worship now; for Christ our Saviour's sake.

CXXXIV

O Lord, our gracious Father! we thank Thee that Thou hast given unto us the Good Shepherd, and that He has given His life for the sheep. And we beseech Thee that, lifted up, He may draw us unto Him, and that we may turn away from all our wanderings and come back to where only peace and rest and joy are found.

We thank Thee for Him Who watches over even wandering souls. And we pray that we may ever yield ourselves to that dear Lord's guidance and governance, and may be of His flock, and partaking of the likeness of the Shepherd. He has become the Lamb of God for us. May we be of, and like Him, the Lamb.

O Lord! we come to render Thee praises that Thou hast called us out of darkness into Thy marvellous light, and we beseech Thee that all professing Christians, with ourselves, may more and more recognise their prerogatives and their obligations, and fulfil the office for which Thou hast called them, that we may be a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ. We bring Thee ourselves, O Lord! We would yield Thee our wills. We would render to Thee our hearts and their obedience. We pray Thee to give us grace to set our affections as well as our thoughts, and our efforts too, upon Thyself; and may we no longer think of ourselves as our own, seeing that we are bought with a price. Help us to remember our priestly office always, and ever to be yielding ourselves living sacrifices which we believe, rendered imperfectly though they may be, still through Jesus Christ are

acceptable unto Thee. Help us, Lord, to stand to the surrender in all times of trial or difficulty. When Thou dost cross our wills may we not murmur. When Thou dost deny our desires may we see that Thou art giving us some greater good. When Thou dost crush our hopes may we set our affections and hopes upon the solid and eternal realities with Thyself; and whence, by whatsoever discipline or providence, sorrowful or joyful, burdensome or light, Thou dost seek to subdue and to conquer our wills, may we be ready to accept all which Thou dost send, and may we be able from the heart to say, 'Not my will but Thy will be done.'

O Lord! Thou hast taught us the secret of peace. May we learn the lesson and not forget; for it is hard to practise. It is easy for us when things go well with us to say we submit, but, O Lord! do Thou strengthen us at all times when it is hard to say, and do Thou lead us in the paths which Thou hast prepared for us, and make our feet strong to tread them, and our hearts willing to walk in them.

We beseech Thee to regard us in our evening's worship, and guide us in all our thoughts and words.

We praise Thee for Thy great mercy to us in that Thou dost allow us to gather thus; we beseech Thee that Thou wilt always grant us the consciousness of Thy blessing, and that we may not be gathered together in our own names, nor trying to worship Thee, or speak Thy word in our own strength and with our own thoughts, but, bowing before Thee in spirit and in truth, may we be brought nearer to Thyself by all this service.

O Lord! bless us as a church and congregation. We pray Thee to quicken Thy life in our hearts; make

us live more as those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. And may the life of Jesus Christ be manifestly lived by us, and we evidently bear about with us in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.

Do Thou help all Thy servants in their homes, in their business, in all the relations and avocations of life, to adorn the doctrine of Jesus Christ our Saviour. And may the words of the Lord sound out from us, all men taking knowledge of us that we have been, and are, with Jesus. And do Thou graciously give Thy blessing to the direct efforts that are made in preaching Thy truth, and in teaching old or young. And grant, we pray Thee, Lord, that large results of blessing and good may follow, and that this church may be having daily added to it such as are being saved.

We beseech Thee to accept us now, to forgive all our sins, in Thy great mercy to reveal Thyself to us as we are met here, and to quicken us that we may draw near to Thee, and enjoy the full blessing intended to be conveyed to Thy children by such services as this. We thank Thee for our gathering together, we pray that it may be in the name of Christ, and so be for the better, and not for the worse, for each of us.

Hear us, O Lord! in our supplication, in Thy mercy forgive our sin, and accept and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXXXV

O Lord, our gracious Father! help us, we beseech Thee, to lift up our hearts to Thee, for we never need Thy

help more than when we who are dust and ashes take upon ourselves to speak unto God. We bless Thee that we are drawn by the mercies of God. May these seem to us greater, more precious, more real, and more our own now when we draw near to Thee. We have often thought of Thy great love in Jesus Christ without any movement of our hearts in thankfulness and submission. We beseech Thee that it may not be so now, but that we may all, having these coals of fire heaped upon our heads by Thine hand for our evil, overcome by Thy patient good, and being drawn by Thy mercies, yield ourselves to Thee. O Lord! deliver us from the chains and entangling fetters of self-will and self-trust, and help us that we may make ourselves, body and soul, living sacrifices which Thou wilt hallow and make acceptable unto Thee. Surely Thou dost deserve all that we can bring, for Thou hast given us all that we have, and we praise Thy great Name for all the mercies of our daily life, for the dealings of Thy providence, for all the good things around us, for life and being, for all the powers which Thou hast bestowed upon us, made in Thine own image, and most of all that Thou hast brought deliverance from the chain of the oppressor and set the captives free. And we beseech Thee that the Son making us free we may be free indeed, and use our liberty to choose to be servants of the Most High God. O Lord! help us to lay to heart all these sweet and gracious counsels which we have been reading. Thou commandest us nothing which is not for our good. How peaceful and blessed our lives would be if our hearts were such as Thy commandment would make them. But we pray for Thy grace to help our weakness, and to give us strength to fulfil

all the precepts of Thy word, to recognise that Thy law is our life. In keeping of Thy commandments there is great reward. May we have the joy of obedience, and feel that Thou Thyself art well pleased with us, with our walk in the world.

We beseech Thee for Thy grace to rest upon us in all the diversity of our circumstances and needs. We thank Thee that whatever these may be there is more than enough with Thee, and that Thou hast still more than enough in Christ for us, 'in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' and all the sweetnesses and powers of the blessed life. We pray that we may receive day by day, as we need, and that we may day by day know our need, and go to the Fountain-head for the supply of all our wants. O Lord! make our faith, we pray Thee, more sweet and more powerful in our daily lives. Do Thou deliver us by its force from all the evils that may unconsciously cleave to us, and from all the things which we often fall into, and yet know that we should not. We pray especially that Thou wouldst cleanse us from unsuspected faults, and that Thou wouldst show us what we see not, what Thou seest and what perhaps our neighbours see plainly, our deficiencies, our shortcomings, and that Thou wouldst mercifully help us to draw nearer to Jesus Christ, and to lay more to heart the lessons of His blessed example, and so be made conformable to the image of Thy dear Son, and transformed by the renewing of our minds.

We pray for Thy blessing and Thy gracious help in this hour of worship. We thank Thee that we can unitedly seek Thy face. O Lord! hide not Thy face far from us, and speak to us this evening in our hearts. And may we all hear Thy message. Do Thou help him

that speaks in Thy Name, that it may be indeed Thy will and word which comes from his lips. Let the word of the Lord have free course. Let the word of men be forgotten.

We beseech Thee to bless us all in our different homes and callings. We pray for all the sad and sorrowful among us, for all connected with us, knit by sacred ties, who may be in weakness of body, bewilderment of mind, harassment of affairs. Be near Thy people; help them in the darkness to feel after, and believe in the Light. And let the Light shine in upon their souls; and may we, and all whom we love, and especially any of them that are in any kind of trouble, be so exercised thereby as that afterwards the peaceable fruit of righteousness shall not fail.

We commend ourselves now, Lord, to Thy gracious care, beseeching Thee to be with us in this hour of worship, and at all times when we seek Thy face. We thank Thee for all past blessings reaped by us, and pray that Thou wouldst still be with us, to keep us in Thy ways, and to bless the provisions of Thy house, and satisfy Thy poor with bread.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, pardon all our sins, and grant Thy gracious help and presence, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

CXXXVI

O Lord, our God! we do come unto Thy house; in the multitude of Thy mercies help us to worship in Thy fear toward Thy holy Temple, and lift up our hearts, we beseech Thee, to Thee now. Whatever may have been the cares or anxieties or busy thoughts with which we have come into Thy house, may these fade

away, or only remain to make us the more eager to find rest from them in God. O Lord! we thank Thee that Thou hast poured out of Thy grace and wisdom upon us in the Revelation of Thy dear Son, and we pray that more and more we may have our hearts and minds filled with the Spirit of Life that was in Jesus Christ, that thereby we may be made indeed free from every law of sin and death. We know that as in ourselves there is very little but weakness and waywardness and sin, we thank Thee that when we feel most our own unfitness and our own waywardness, then we can venture to cleave most closely to Jesus Christ, and to grasp His hand more firmly.

We pray that Thou wouldst help us in this approach to Thee; may we all enter into the depths of our own hearts, and realise more than we sometimes do what these need for peace and quietness, for rest and righteousness, for pardon and purity. We thank Thee, Lord, that we never need to be disappointed, however dark may be our estimate of what we ourselves are, and however lofty may be our conception of what Thou dost require, and however solemn may be our anticipations of Thy judgment. We bless Thee that with all these solemn and sacred thoughts Thou hast given us the one that is the crown of them all, the fulness of Thy pardoning love and sanctifying grace treasured for all men in Jesus Christ our Saviour. And we beseech Thee that we may lay hold of that great salvation as Thou hast revealed it. May we accept it. May we not only believe with our minds but with our hearts, and confess with our lips, the Lord Jesus Christ. And strengthen us, we pray Thee, that day by day we may live as becometh His servants, doing His holy will from the heart, and delighting in every act which may

express our obedience to, and our aspiration after, Him.

We beseech Thee to keep us from our own besetting sins, from our own particular temptations, from those things which may make the strongest appeal to our worst parts, from all the difficulties and temptations belonging to our professions or occupations, to our temperament or to circumstances. Thou knowest what these are, and we thank Thee for all the Fatherly pity with which Thou dost look on Thy feeble children, and we pray Thee that Thou wouldst strengthen us there where Thou knowest that we are weakest, and where we sometimes know not that we are. We beseech Thee for Thy mighty rejoicing Spirit to dwell in us, and make us glad. May the joy of the Lord be our strength. May our religion be a happy religion. May it lead us in paths of peace, and fill our lips with songs of praise, and make all things brighter, and scatter many clouds, and conquer all fears. Help us day by day in the routine of our daily duties. May we not reckon anything as of little importance because we do it every day we live. May we not come to our work with the spirit of mechanism because it is so habitually recurring in our daily lives. May the things that we have done oftenest be done best, and in all of them may we keep up the freshness of feeling that we have not passed this way heretofore, and that God is with us, to make all things—even old tasks, and commonplace duties, and familiar, lifelong associations—all things new.

Guide us in all our thoughts, and be with us now, speak not only to our understandings but to our hearts and to our wills, and enable us to lay hold of Thy truth, and to make it our own; and to mark, learn, and

inwardly digest it, and live by it when we go out again into the world. Be near each of us in our different circumstances, comfort any that are in sorrow, great or small. Lead us by Thy light; deliver us from temptation; set our feet upon a Rock; and establish our goings. Give Thy help in all our work as a Christian church. Upon all the workers, upon all who hear Thy word, shed abroad Thy grace, and grant that Thy truth may not be proclaimed among us in vain, but that it may run and be glorified. In like manner bless all Thy workers. Hear us now when we cry to Thee; grant the help of Thy good Spirit in this hour of evening worship that we may all behold wondrous things out of Thy law, and go away quickened and strengthened and brought nearer to Christ.

CXXXVII

O Lord, our gracious Father! help us to lift up our hearts to Thee now, gladly and obediently, as becometh children, and knowing in Whom we have believed, and that He sends His Spirit to make intercession in us, and He, standing before the Throne, to make intercession for us. We bless Thee for those great storehouses laid up in Jesus Christ in Whom Thy riches in glory are accessible and available for each of us, and we beseech Thee that we may not be poor when such wealth is at our command, nor ever feel the pain and pressure of necessity when Thou art ready to supply all our need. May we claim our portion in Thee by lowly faith, assured confidence, earnest desire, and do Thou come to us in the greatness of Thy love and the suitableness of Thy gifts, bestowing upon us all the things which our circumstances, our duties, our weaknesses

require, and which Thou art so infinitely ready to give.

O Lord! help us to cultivate with more ardour and earnestness than ever we have done whatsoever things are lovely and of good report. And grant us Thy gracious help day by day to overcome everything in ourselves which is the opposite of these, and to make more and more our own the graces of conduct and character to which we are inclined by nature. We thank Thee for all Thy gracious promises to them that put their trust in Thee, and for all the wondrous fulfilment of the same which Thou hast given in past ages to waiting hearts. We thank Thee that the fulness is the same as it was long ago, that there is enough for us, enough for each, enough for evermore, in Thy great storehouses. Grant us then, we pray Thee this evening, some gift from Thyself that shall abide with us, in its sweetness and in its power, for many days, and shall help to change us into the image of the Heavenly, and to make us more and more what Thou wouldst have us to be. O Lord! we praise and magnify Thy Name that Thou hast poured out upon us such large bestowments of grace and peace and joy. And we ask Thee that that peace which passes understanding may indeed keep our hearts in the knowledge and fear of Thy holy Name, and in Christ Jesus, and in order that it may, O Lord! help us more and more to be careful for nothing, 'but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to make our requests known unto God.' Our hearts being knit thus to Thee, may all our lives be ordered in conformity with virtue and with praise. May the God of Peace Himself be with us. O Lord! grant, we pray Thee, that for all of us gathered here this evening, our names may be in the

Book of Life, and may we yield ourselves to that great Saviour Who accepts, and inscribes upon His hands, and upon His heart, the names of all who trust in Him.

Be near us in all our meditations and words, and grant that our meetings together here, and on Sundays, and at all times, may be under the influence of Thy gracious Spirit, and accompanied with that blessing which maketh rich. Prosper the work that any of us may try to do for Thy Name. Little it is at the best, and stained it is at the purest; but we thank Thee that Thou dost condescend to use even broken reeds for Thine instruments, and that Thou dost bless even the imperfect work, and the mingled motives of Thy servants. May we receive more and more of Thy blessing, and be more and more sure that we have it in all our work for Thee. And let the Spirit of the Lord dwell in this congregation, and in all congregations of faithful men and women in this city, and with all communions that love the Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption. Grant a large influx of souls to Thy Kingdom as a result of Thy servants' labours, and let us all, in accordance with Thy will, be Thy witnesses in the world.

Bless any of us that are in special need, in sorrow, in perplexity, in trial, or joy. We pray Thee that whatsoever may be the condition of the present in which we are, and whatever may be the character of Thy providences in regard to us, we may have that good Spirit with us to make us wise, to know what the Lord means by His dealings with us.

Now, O Lord! we beseech Thee to hear us, to take us into Thy gracious care, to forgive all our sins, and to grant us Thy helpful blessing, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXXXVIII

O LORD, our God! lift our hearts and fix our faith, we beseech Thee, that we too may live in the sunshine of that blessed persuasion that nothing but our own evil hearts can separate us from Thy love. We thank Thee that we have access to Thee with confidence even in the midst of all our knowledge of our own unworthiness and sin, and we have to lament in Thy presence that when the desires of Thy house and of Thy heart have been so freely opened for us, we have been so slow to enter in and dwell in the blessed abode Thou hast provided for us.

We would come to Thee now, seeking Thy grace to help us to withdraw our thoughts from everything that might hinder the depth and blessedness of our communion with Thee. We thank Thee for all the great gifts which Thou hast bestowed upon us, the mighty promises Thou dost flash before our eyes, and the great fulfilment of the same with which Thou dost gladden the hearts of them that wait upon Thee, and we pray that something of that same triumphant faith of which we have been reading may pass into all our hearts, and may animate all our lives. We bless Thee that it matters very little what, or who, is against us, so long as we are sure that Thou art for us. We thank Thee that no condemnation by men, nor any unfavourable human judgment, need in the least trouble us, if Thou hast accepted us. And we thank Thee for that great Saviour Who not only has died to bring us near, but lives that we may still be nearer, and by Him and through Him may receive likeness to Himself, and a participation in His own life. May His grace be more abundantly given to us,

that we may indeed die the death unto sin and live the life of God. May we possess more and more that life and peace which come from minding the things of the Spirit, and whilst we have to do with outward affairs, and have our daily duties and the circumstances of our lives to attend to, and to occupy us, may we still live our truest lives in the secret place of the Most High. Grant, O Lord! Thy gracious Spirit to abide in our hearts, and may we each live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and possess the peace and the joy and the holiness which come therefrom.

O Lord! we draw near to Thee now with many acknowledgments of our unworthiness and transgressions, our many shortcomings and departures from Thy way. Often we have known far better than we have done. Often we have gone directly opposite to what we have known to be duty. But we pray Thee that Thou wouldst forgive all that has been incomplete, and all that has been sinful in our past lives; and wouldst help us day by day, and moment by moment, forgetting the things that are behind, and committing them to Thy pardoning mercy, and looking forward to the things that are before, and accepting them through Thy sanctifying grace, to 'press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.' May none of us count ourselves so to have attained as to slacken our diligence in the Christian course; may none of us stray away from the path which Thou hast traced for us, but ever set our feet in the footsteps of Jesus Who has left us an example that we should follow in His steps.

O Lord! give to us now Thy gracious presence, and the consciousness of Thy light shining upon our hearts whilst we bow here before Thee. We thank

Thee that we can gather thus. We bless Thee for all mercies received from Thine hand, some of us for many years, in this place. And we pray that Thou wouldst still be near us, to bless, to guide, and to keep us; and grant that whenever Thy word is proclaimed Thy Spirit's power may carry it to all hearts. O Lord! bless all the provisions of Thy house, and fill Thy poor with bread. Grant that upon us there may abide, more and more fully and manifestly, the quickening and cleansing influence of the love and life of Jesus Christ. May we feel that we have laid upon us the charge to be Thy witnesses, and discharge the office which Thou hast intrusted to us.

Be near to each of us, according to our diverse conditions, trials, and duties. Be with us in our daily life, in the common things of our ordinary occupations. May we consecrate them all unto Thee, and may everything be hallowed because all is done as in Thy sight, for Thy sake, by Thy help, to Thy glory.

O Lord! comfort and succour, be near to console and bind up. Speak Thy gracious, sweet words to all sad and solitary souls. Grant that whatever hindrances, annoyances, losses, disappointments, and pains we may meet in our daily lives, we may so love Thee as that all shall work together for our good.

And now, Lord, take us into Thy care, and keep us in Thy mercy. Grant that the love of God may dwell in our hearts, and the life of Christ live in our spirits. Through His name we pray all these things.

CXXXIX

O Lord, our God! lift our hearts to Thyself, we beseech Thee, when we lift our voices in prayer, and help us

not only in words, but in lowly devotion and thankful and trustful hearts, to draw near to Thee, and to open our spirits to the reception of all the sweet and sacred influences which Thou dost pour down upon them that wait before Thee.

We thank Thee, Lord! for any occasions in which we have been able to set to our seal that it is no vain thing to call upon the Lord, and we take shame to ourselves that we have not more such remembrances, for surely if they are few it is not because Thine ear is deaf, or Thy hand shortened that it cannot save, but because our prayers have been wanting in earnestness, in faith, in submission.

We come to Thee now, and beseech Thee for Thy blessing as we bow ourselves here before Thee. O Lord! grant, we beseech Thee, that that gracious Spirit of Whose sweet and fair fruit we have been reading may dwell in our hearts, and that we, being grafted into the true Vine, partaking of that life that flows through all the branches, may bear fruit that shall abide, and shall abound. Help us, we pray Thee, to crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts; and to live in the Spirit in the depths of our own souls, and to walk in the Spirit in our daily conversation.

We thank Thee, O Lord! for all the promises which Thou dost give, and for their gracious fulfilment to many generations. Thou hast said that Thou wilt help all them that seek Thee, and wilt enable them to live soberly, righteously, and godly. Come Thou to us, we pray Thee, with Thy gracious influences; and may our hearts open to these gracious influences, and then close upon them to keep them safe, and live by them, that by their use they may increase.

We thank Thee for daily blessings showered upon us

beyond desert, beyond count, which often pass unnoticed and often are received unimproved. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst help us day by day, in all the variety of circumstances and occupations belonging to us, to set our hearts to keep Thy holy law, and to live according to our different callings in dependence upon Thee, and doing everything, great or small, as by and to the Lord. We thank Thee that Thou hast been with us this day, and the tokens of Thy presence have been abundant, in the continuance of many blessings, in the averting of many possible disasters, in the bestowing upon us of gracious influences which we have, alas! not always recognised or always used, and in bringing us thus together this evening, together to confess our sins, together to pray for Thy gracious help, together to commit ourselves and one another to Thy unfailing and loving care. Help us as we bow here in Thy presence; give to each waiting heart some influences from Thyself which shall make us more and more sure that we have Thy love, and that we are using Thy love. Teach us how to speak some word in Thy Name, forgive all the imperfections of motive which have brought us here, and notwithstanding these and the little merit that we have, do Thou graciously shape Thy gifts to us, and grant that our gathering together may, for all of us, be full of blessing and full of profit.

We pray for one another, that in all the different homes from which we come Thy Spirit may dwell. We pray that Thy Spirit may dwell in our own hearts. Guide us, O Lord! by Thy counsel, lift upon us the light of Thy countenance, make us strong with Thy strength, and help us even to glory in infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon us. If any of us feel that we especially need Thy teaching, Thy support, or Thy con-

solations, draw Thou near to such, we pray. May we not shrink from Thee, but be glad when Thou comest to us, and cherish and foster all thoughts that lead us to Thee. And do Thou shape Thy gifts to each need, and draw very nigh in Thy sweetness, and in Thy patient power, to all our hearts. Shed abroad there the consecration of Thy presence, and the consolation of Thy grace. And grant that we may live as those who have been bought with a price, to live as those whose home is with God, and whose lives are hid with Christ in Him.

We pray for all this people, present or absent; especially that Thy rich blessing may attend our work as a church, and the ministration of Thy truth amongst us. Thou hast been our help, O Lord! some of us can say for many years that are past, in the worship of this sanctuary, and for all blessing and good granted we desire to praise Thy gracious Name, and to pray that Thou wouldst not leave us nor forsake. Still lift upon us the light of Thy countenance, and make Thy word more mighty than ever it has been for the great purpose whereunto Thou hast sent it.

Hear us now, grant us Thy gracious help; forgive and answer, through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

CXL

Almighty God, our gracious Father and ever-present Helper and Friend! help us now to lift up our hearts to Thee, and truly to pray and to draw near in thought fixed and grateful; and we desire to come lowly, and earnest, and in confidence unbroken, and conscious of our many sins. May we indeed feel that we speak unto

One that is more ready to hear than we are to speak, and to give than we are to ask or expect.

O Lord! we thank Thee that our prayers have not to move Thy heart, but that our knowledge of Thy heart moves our prayers. We bless Thee that before we call Thou hast answered, and that whilst we are yet speaking Thou hast not retired from us. We thank Thee for the greatest of Thy gifts, which Thou didst give before Thou wert asked for it, but didst give as Thou didst send the light and the joy upon the men that wait not nor look for them. We beseech Thee for Thy gracious help that we may accept the things that are freely given to us of God, and may not be asking as if Thou hadst not already bestowed, in Jesus Christ, the free gift of all things to us. We would rather pray that Thou wouldst help us to open our eyes to see how rich we are; to open our hands to take the treasures, and to open our hearts to store them there, and to use them for evermore.

O Lord! give us all the light of Thy countenance to shine upon our hearts, and more of Thy peaceful consciousness of Thy loving hand about us, that in all our ways directed, and where we be restrained and corrected, may we walk humbly with our God. O Lord! Thou dost let us call Thee ours, and we pray that we may be more truly than ever Thine by complete surrender, by perfect faith, by lowly obedience.

Go with us, we pray Thee, through all the variety of our daily conditions and circumstances. And in the varying duties of life may we have Thine unvarying help, which is always the same, for all the differences are in us, and with Thee is no variableness neither shadow of turning. We pray Thee to strengthen us, moment by moment, for our duties. Thou dost lay

upon us wise burdens, even when they are hard to carry, and Thou dost never send more sorrow than Thou art waiting to send consolation for. If we have need of patience, art Thou not the God of patience; and wilt Thou not give to us through patience and the consolations of Scripture the hope that can never be ashamed? May it be so with regard to each of us. May our daily lives be fuller of God than they have been, and emptier of self than of old. Bring us, O Lord! into the full sunlight of Thy presence; may we not be groping in the dark, or in twilight, when we might be walking in the light of Thy face. And do Thou give us more peaceful joy in our religion, and make it more the very strength of our hearts, as well as the rule and guide of our lives.

Forgive all our evil, we beseech Thee. We have to acknowledge before Thee that we have often forgotten Thee in the midst of Thy mercies; that we have still oftener forgotten Thee in the pressure and grind of daily duty. But we pray that in the time to come we may not so frequently stray away from Thee at the very time when we need Thee most. And may all the things that we have to do bring us nearer to Thyself, depending upon Thee for strength to do them, and doing them all as unto God, and not unto men. Oh that we may not be blinded by commonplace or custom, nor think anything small because it comes to us day by day. We bless Thee that Thou art with us in the little tasks as well as in the great ones, and we pray that when it is our lot to walk we may not be weary, and when it is ours to run we may not faint, but at all times, walking or running, may our spirits be mounting up on wings as eagles, and drawing to Thee for immortal strength.

We pray Thee to bless us here in Thy presence now. Thou knowest our needs; we bless Thee that we do not need to inform Thee of these, but Thou dost let us come to Thee, and tell Thee what Thou dost know so well because it eases us to speak; and to whom can we speak so well as to our Father? We pray Thee, then, to comfort any amongst us who may be in any kind of trouble or sorrow, and if the road be rough and long be Thou their Companion. If the road be lonely draw Thou very near to them. And may their hands grasp Thy hand, and so their hands uphold their feet.

Be with us, Lord! when we try to speak a word in Thy Name. Grant that to each of us this may be an hour of quickening and blessing, of strength and renewed power. Let Thy mercy be upon us, and upon all our brethren in this city, of every name and communion, and upon all the churches of Thy people, and upon all good men who are trying to make every man better and happier. And grant, we pray Thee, that Thy blessing may rest upon all the work of Thy servants throughout the world; and that we too in our little corner may receive some of the showers, that this fleece may not be dry whilst all around is moistened from above.

We pray Thee to hear us, grant us Thy gracious help in this evening's worship; Thyself speak to us and in us; and forgive us all, through Jesus Christ Thine Incarnate and Everlasting Word.

CXLI

O Lord, our gracious Father! we would draw near to Thee with thankful and glad hearts, and bless Thee

that the door of Thy Sanctuary in the Heavens is ever open, and Thine ear too. We thank Thee that Thy hand is full of blessing, and that Thou waitest to be gracious for more than we wait upon Thee for Thy mercy. Incline our hearts, we pray Thee, not so much to ask as if Thou wert not disposed to give before we ask, but to take the things that are freely given, and have been given from of old, and are made the common property of all men, in the great gift in Jesus Christ. We would claim, then, O Lord! the burden of our sins, the cleansing of our hearts, the bowing of our wills, the peaceful sense of Thy presence with us day by day; the power to serve Thee, the power to conquer our own transgressions, the clear vision of Thy face, the joyful assurance that Thou lovest us, the consciousness that Thou art working in us, and the bright hope of the crown of righteousness which the Judge shall give 'to all them that love His appearing.'

Thy hands are full of blessings, but the blessings of Thy hands are the least of Thy gifts. We crave the blessings of Thy heart, and of Thy Spirit, and beseech Thee that our whole being may be moulded, sanctified, calmed, and strengthened by Thine own presence in our hearts. O Lord! let us not be content with small portions of Thy great gift. May our desires be extended to the reach of Thy purposes. Thou hast encouraged us to open our mouths wide. Do Thou fill them, and give to us, we pray Thee, more than we have ever possessed of the fulness of Thy love and of Thy Spirit of life to make us free from the law of sin and death.

We come to Thee this evening with thankfulness for every blessing which Thou hast bestowed upon us, and looking back upon the days that are gone we pray

Thee for grace to see in all of them the dealings of the Lord. May we, in regard of our own individual lives, observe them; that we may understand the loving-kindness of our God. Accept our praise for all Thy providence, and for all blessings which we have still in our possession. We pray Thee that all Thy dealings with us, the discipline of life, our daily duties, the disappointments that do come, and all the burdens and cares that Thou layest upon our shoulders, may serve in us the purpose which Thou dost contemplate in sending them for our profit, that we may be partakers of Thy holiness. O Lord! regard us all according to our different needs. Draw near to each of us as Thou knowest we severally require. We believe that Thou dost yet speak in, and to, the spirits of men; and that the days when the voice of the Lord could be heard by the hearing ear are not past. We pray that Thou wouldst speak to, and in us, and in all the varieties of our duties and conditions that Thou wouldst minister to us the right words at the right time, and cause to rise in our thoughts and minds the true judgments, and in our hearts the true desires which Thou wilt always approve and answer. We pray for any here that may be in any trouble; succour and bless all such as Thou only canst.

We ask Thee to draw near to any of us that may have difficult work before us; help us to cast all our burdens upon the God that bears them daily, if we will let Him; and that we may be free from anxiety, because we know that He careth for us. We beseech Thee to bless all Thy servants in their several spheres, and their work at home and abroad, and to raise up many more of Thy people who shall have it laid upon their hearts and consciences to declare what God hath

done for their souls. And we beseech Thee that a quickened and revived Church may have more influence in the world, and that men may be drawn in multitudes to the Lord of all men; and that the evils under which our brethren have so long groaned may be in some measure reduced. O Lord! give us Thy blessing as we are here before Thee this evening. Let Thy words, spoken amongst us always, be dictated by Thee and directed by Thee. And do Thou grant, we pray Thee, that as the result of our meeting together as a church and a congregation, and as the result of the various energies and activities which are put forth here, the Kingdom of Jesus Christ may be extended, and many hearts, old and young, be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and with the gladness of that great Light.

We pray Thee to accept our thanks that Thou dost permit us to gather together thus again; and to shed Thy blessing upon us as we wait here before Thee, and in all our work as unworthy representatives of Christ the great Lord.

CXLII

O Lord, our Father! we would prepare our hearts to approach unto Thee, and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us and lift our thoughts and desires really to Thyself. We feel that we have often taken the words of adoration upon very irreverent lips, and have often spoken the things that we have heard other people say in our prayers, than given utterance to the desires of our own hearts at the moment. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst deliver us from all vain words, as well as from all wandering thoughts,

and wouldst help us now to draw near to Thee in that lowly reverence which becomes those who approach to the place where Thy majesty dwelleth. We thank Thee for that great vision which we have been reading, and that is meant for us too. We bless Thee for the countenance 'as of the sun shining in its strength'; and we pray that in the light of that face of the glorified Christ we may walk all our days, and find that there is no darkness in Him, and none that can live around those on whom He lifts the light of His countenance.

We beseech Thee to help us to lay loving and believing hands upon the head of that great Sacrifice, and to feel all the blessedness of the thought that He Who liveth for ever became dead for our sakes, and is alive for evermore; and holds in the hands that were nailed to the Cross the Keys of Hell and of Death. So may we be able to trust ourselves, living or dead, to the Lord, and feel that nowhere can we go where His presence will not be with us, and His right hand hold us up. Purge our eyes, too, O Lord! that in our measure we may see the things that the eyes of sense cannot see, and that sin hides from us all; and to us, too, may the Heavens not be empty but everything be filled with the one great vision of the Eternal God manifest in Jesus Christ.

We beseech Thee for Thy cleansing grace to be granted to each of us. Surely we need day by day the washing of Thy holy, forgiving love, as well as the sanctifying of Thy Holy Spirit. And we pray that Thou wouldst increasingly deliver us from all the power of all sin, and make us more and more anxious to be, and so more and more sure of being like the Master over Whom Death and Sin have no dominion.

May we, too, be set free from their power, and live the lives that we live in the flesh only, 'holiness unto God.'

O Lord! we feel that this day we have fallen beneath Thy holy will; beneath even our own knowledge of that will. There has been much imperfect, much contrary to Thy blessed commandments and Thy blessed image; but we pray for Thy pardoning mercy, and ask that Thou wouldst help us day by day to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. And do Thou help each of us to know more fully, and with less of the illusions that come from lurking love of sin, what the mind of the Lord is concerning us, and so to give ourselves more earnestly and constantly to the realising of Thy holy will, even our sanctification. O Lord! keep us in our daily life. We may do the little things for Thee. May we remember Thee in all the trifles, in all the constantly recurring duties that make up the lives of all of us. May we carry Thee into every corner of our business, of our homes, of our hearts. May all that we do, be it great or small—whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, may it be to Thy glory. We pray Thee for Thy blessing in our worship of this evening. Touch all our hearts, O Lord! If there be any coldness, any carelessness, any cherished evil purpose in us, that comes between us and Thee, we pray that this may be taken away. O Lord! we do not trust our own judgments of ourselves. We may know nothing against ourselves, yet we are not thereby justified. So we ask Thee that Thou wouldst search us and try us, and see if there be any wicked way in us that prevents us from entering into the full joy of this hour of prayer, and deriving full profit from it. And if there is, do Thou give us strength to cast it from us. We pray for all before Thee this evening, for each of us in

our several spheres and circumstances. Give us, O Lord! Thy presence day by day, and make all things serve the highest purposes in our lives, that we may be educated for Heaven in the school of earth; and may be learning here to use the tools that we shall use for better work hereafter. We pray that if any of us have troubles to carry which make it hard for us to yield our wills to Thee, Thou wouldst graciously strengthen us, and give Thy servants grace to submit. And then do Thou minister to them the peace that comes from having no wills of their own contrary to the will of God.

O Lord! comfort and bind up all broken hearts. Reveal the meaning of our sorrows to each of us; and grant to us the patience which Thou dost give to them that keep near Thee with quiet hearts.

We pray for Thy blessing upon all work done by any of us for Thy holy Name. Especially we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless us as a church and congregation; that Thou wouldst give to us deeper holiness and more ardent faith, that Thou wouldst help us day by day to take up the Master's Cross and the Master's banner, and so to show forth His holy Name. And in all our work in preaching Thy word, or ministering the truth, to young or old, we pray that Thy mercy may be upon us, that our unfaithfulness and unworthiness may be neutralised; and that the power of the Lord may be near, to minister, wherever the word of the Lord is preached among us. We beseech Thee to forgive our sins, to help, and answer us; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CXLIII

O LORD, our gracious Father! we draw near to Thee with lowly obedience and loving hearts, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst look upon our lowliness, and accept our imperfect love. We praise and bless Thee for every good gift from Thy hands. These far surpass our deserts. Thou hast given us more than Thou hast promised us; and we praise and bless Thee for all the devious ways by which Thou dost lead us through the world, in so far as Thy purpose and providence have been concerned. Thou hast led us by the right way. If we have ever strayed from the path, it has been our own fault; and if ever we have found that the way led through Valleys of the Shadow of Death, and was in many places crooked and rough, we would recognise Thy loving disposal of all things, and would believe that our Lord is our Shepherd, and leads us for His own Name's sake in the paths which are right in His sight. Help us, then, we beseech Thee, to leave ourselves, in regard of outward things, more fully, more peacefully, more continually in Thy gracious hands, and while we put forth the efforts which it is Thy holy will that we should make, and labour about the meat that perisheth, and about the things of this world as Thou hast enjoined upon each of us by our circumstances, we beseech Thee that beneath all the work there may be a spirit of quiet trust, and that whilst we exercise our own understandings and our own efforts, we may still, and in the midst of all our work and all our thinking, be resting upon God, and waiting patiently for Him. Oh help us, we pray Thee, to seek first the Kingdom of God, and even whilst our hands and our thoughts are occupied, as they must

needs be, about the other things, may we be seeking the Kingdom through them and in them. So help us, Lord! to make this world, and all our experiences here, what Thou dost mean it to be, a school for bringing us nearer to Thyself, and teaching us more of what Thou art. And may we exercise ourselves unto godliness, and day by day enter anew upon the struggle, on the conflict, on the race. Abide with us, we beseech Thee, in all our daily occupations. May we learn increasingly to hallow Thee by all, and to bring Thee into everything that there may be fragrance and peace and blessedness in all that we touch and all that touches us.

Do Thou accept us as we come to Thee now with petitions for Thy gracious help and presence in this hour of worship. We thank Thee that we may turn aside from the paths of daily life for an hour, and we beseech Thee that Thy gracious presence may be very truly felt by every one of us in our gathering together now. We pray that our hearts may receive from Thee the same touch of Thine own gracious influences, and that whatsoever we may especially need we may find coming to our spirits as we wait here before Thee. We do not know our own deepest necessities. We may need to be corrected for things that we do not recognise to be wrong. We need to be encouraged in all that we know to be right and good. We need Thy perfecting power, Thy sustaining power, Thy enlightening power; and we pray Thee that whatever we may specially and individually require we may individually receive as we bow before Thee now. O Lord! we believe that it is no vain thing to call upon the Lord; and Thou hast promised that where two or three are gathered together in Thy Name, Thou,

in Thy dear Son, wilt be in the midst of them. We beseech Thee that it may be so with us this evening, and do Thou use these outward forms of worship for deepening the devotion of our hearts, and bestowing upon us large gifts from Thyself. Help us in hearing and speaking the word of eternal life, and let Thy message be appropriate for us, and come with the force which Thou only canst give it to our hearts.

O Lord! we thank Thee for all Thy dealings with this church and congregation in the past. We pray that Thou wilt be with us in the future, and that we may magnify Thy Name that is above every name, and vindicate our right to call ourselves Christians by our daily life and consistent conduct, and by all that marks Thy people, in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation.

O Lord! we commend one another to Thy care. We pray for one another, present or absent, who may be in any kind of sorrow or trouble. We beseech Thee to be near such and bind up the wounds which Thou hast made. Surely Thy providence is not less Fatherly and loving when it makes them than when it bandages them. We beseech Thee that any of us, or of those known to us, or dear to any of us, who may be in any kind of trouble or sorrow, may be able to cast their burden upon the Lord, and find that He sustains them, and carries it.

O Lord! draw near to us now, we beseech Thee, in Thy great mercy; forgive all our iniquity; and grant us Thy gracious help and presence, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CXLIV

O Lord, our gracious Father! we would draw near to Thee with thankful hearts, for surely Thy mercies are new every morning, and great is Thy faithfulness. We praise and bless Thee for all Thy ways with us, but most of all we come to Thee through that great Saviour in Whom we have acceptance through His blood, even the remission of sins, and all other gifts that we need. And we plead that we may have the more abundant life which He has come to bestow, and that in our hearts the full blessedness and all the gracious fruits of fellowship with Jesus may be manifested to those as well as experienced by ourselves. Strengthen us, O Lord! we pray Thee, day by day, for our recurring duties. May we have Thy hand constantly laid upon us, breathing into us, communicating to us life and strength and all that we require for godliness. We thank Thee that Thou dost never lay upon any of us tasks beyond the strength that Thou art waiting to give if we turn to Thee, and that however sometimes we seem to ourselves to be thwarted and burdened with duties or with sorrows, Thou knowest our power, and dost make our strength as our day, if we will only look to Thee for it. We thank Thee for any experience that any of us have had in the past to confirm our faith, that Thou dost never reap where Thou hast not sown, nor gather where Thou hast not strawed. We pray that we may be strengthened and fitted for all that may still lie before us, in the way of work or of suffering, until we come to the rest that remaineth for the people of God. O Lord! bind us to Thyself more nearly than we ever have been bound; and help us to put far

from us anything in ourselves that loosens the union between God and us. May we cherish no murmurings, no regrets; may we live in faith, may we try to please Thee; may we set our affections more and more on the things that are above. And may we thus find that earthly duties, and all changing circumstances of this world, which is a world of change, only help us to lay more firmly hold upon the unchanging grace of the Eternal God. We thank Thee that we have the Saviour, Who is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever. We beseech Thee that we may have more grace given to us to seek Him through, and find Him in, all the unstable 'things that are seen and temporal.' We bless Thee that Thou hast committed even to each some portion of Thy great Revelation of Thyself; and that even the smallest of our duties and enjoyments has a message in charge for our souls, and is meant to do us good, and bring us nearer to Thee. O Lord! may we not waste Thy providences; may we not misuse Thy gifts; may we day by day draw near to Thyself and be more conformed and calmed in our possession of Thy strength and peace, and so live lives worthier Him that hath called us, and that great Saviour Who has redeemed us, and of that great reward which He promises. We ask Thee to forgive all that has been amiss in us, and to bind us now to Thyself afresh. We thank Thee that notwithstanding our consciousness of unworthiness we do not need to be afraid of coming to Thee, and opening all our hearts to Thee. And we adore with wonder that unchanging love which lives on in spite of men's sins, and is mightier than they, and ready to cast them all behind Thy back into the depths of the sea. We pray that it may be so with each of us, and that the things which have

had dominion over us may rule us no more, but that Christ and the peace of God may rule in our hearts, and make us what Thou wouldst have us to be.

We thank Thee for Thy blessings which Thou hast communicated to us in time past, in our worship here. And we pray that this evening, too, we may receive from Thy hand some message of the sort suited to our present condition. Lift us up, O Lord! we pray Thee, above the things that pass and perish. And help us in our worship that we may indeed lay a firm hold of faith on the very horns of the altar. May we cleave to Thee, and see Thee, and know Thy will concerning us.

And bless our meditations together. Give us some word to speak, O Lord! Thou knowest the needs of each heart before Thee. Grant that we may be indeed as the Scribes, 'instructed into the Kingdom of God, bringing forth into the storehouse things new and old.'

O Lord! let Thy blessing rest upon us as a Christian congregation, and upon each individual member of it. Grant that our lives may be more in accord with our profession; and that this church collectively, and in its individual members, may be as a light set on a candlestick to give light to all that are in the house. From us may the word of the Lord sound out even by the silent eloquence of holy lives. And grant that any who specially need Thy comfort and help may be abundantly succoured and sustained by Thee. We pray for all that are weary and sorrowful. We commend to Thy Fatherly heart all that are afflicted, in mind, body, or estate. We beseech Thee to be near them all, and grant that none may spurn Thee, or shut their hearts against Thy gracious consolations.

And now, O Lord! we commit ourselves to Thy gracious care. We pray Thee to accept our thanks for all Thy mercy and blessings; to forgive all our sins, and to draw near to us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CXLV

O LORD, our gracious Father! Whose ear is ever open to our cry, may our hearts ever be open to receive from Thee the large gifts which, before we call, Thou art waiting to bestow. We bless Thee for that great and wonderful word that Thou waitest to be gracious, as if Thou didst attend upon us, and didst consult our changing moods. We bless and praise Thee; we thank Thee for the wonderfulness of such a truth, and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to wait before the Lord, and in prayerful expectation and humble desire and strong faith that our hearts may be filled from Thyself. O Lord! we need Thee at every turn, for every work, at every moment. There is nothing in us that is strong and good, except by Thy inspiration and grace. We are, because Thou hast willed that we should be; and we are what we are because Thou hast set us in our various places, and given us our different powers. Alas! that we have so often gone against Thy purposes, and failed to apprehend Thy meaning, and been but unfaithful stewards of the substance that Thou hast committed to our charge. We bring all these weaknesses and faults to Thee this evening, and confess them humbly in Thy gracious presence; and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst now draw near to each of us. O Lord! Thou seest how little our hearts kindle when we come into Thy

presence, and how often our prayers are very few and but little winged by faith and expectation. We pray that Thou wouldst be near us now, and from whatever homes or circumstances we may have come, and whatever in our day's work has been heavy or harassing, or whatever anxieties and cares we may have, may we not, by reason of any of these, lose the blessing which Thou dost intend to bestow upon us when Thou dost let us gather together thus. May we all feel in some measure, and in the manner that our circumstances require, Thy gracious hand upon us; and may it draw us nearer to Thyself. And the good hand of the Lord our God being upon us, may we be strengthened, now and always, for all our duties. And whatsoever we do may we do it heartily, as to and by the Lord, and not unto men. We come near to Thee praying for grace that we may loyally, and in a lowly spirit, serve our Master which is in Heaven. And we pray that thus we may each come to realise that there is nothing so blessed in life as to sacrifice our own will upon Christ's altar. Do Thou help us, we pray Thee, that our hearts may be filled with the love of Him; and to that end may our thoughts often turn believingly to the great love which Thou hast to us, and which Christ our Lord is. O Father! we feel that Thy gospel is very simple in all that we need to know and do. And we pray that whilst we make diligent efforts to understand what the will of the Lord is, and are growing in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, our growth in grace may always go step by step with our growth in knowledge; and that we may possess and deserve the happiness of those who, knowing these things, do them. We ask Thy forgiveness for all that has been contrary to Thy holy will in our lives. We pray for the

enlightening of Thy good Spirit, that we may see more clearly the particulars in which we fail, or come short of Thy sovereign will. Search us, O God! and know our hearts; try us and know our thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting. We beseech Thee that our days may increasingly be filled with Thy praise and Thy honour all the day long, and that our lives may more and more bear witness to our faith and love.

O Lord! grant us Thy gracious help as we bow here before Thee this evening; and do Thou speak some word in our hearts that, spoken by our lips, may be profitable to Thy children.

We thank Thee for all the mercies which we have received from Thee in time past, in our meeting together here. We pray that Thou wouldst still bless to us the provisions of Thy house, and fill Thy poor with bread. Increase our faith, hope, and love; and make us more anxious to bear witness for the Master; and from us, as from a trumpet, may there sound out the Name of Jesus Christ, and His praise be set forth by our efforts, by our words when called for, and by our lives always.

We would commend one another to Thy gracious care, be with us in all our anxieties and difficulties, and that we may in our degree realise that in all our afflictions Thou wert afflicted, and that the Angel of Thy presence saves us.

We pray Thee to bind up all wounds which Thy providence has made, and to draw near to all Thy people; and grant that we may draw near to Thee if the darkness is falling around us. Surely the best place for a child lost in the night is to grasp the Father's hand. We beseech Thee that we may all be

able to do that according to our different measure and necessities.

And now accept us as we come; forgive our many sins; and grant us the blessing of Thy felt presence and Thy teaching Spirit in our midst this evening; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXLVI

O LORD! we thank Thee for that Eternal purpose and grace which was before the world began, and turned from all Eternity unto the creatures that were yet to be. We thank Thee that it is now manifested unto us in all the greatness of the riches of Thy grace in Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished Death, and brought life and immortality to light. For all the blessings that are treasured for us in Him we would desire to magnify and praise that Holy Name, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw us near to Thee now, that in lowly thanksgiving and with real desire we may come into that Presence which is all full of life and blessedness to those that love it.

We thank Thee for Thy great mercies to us day by day; and for all the benefits that are showered upon us, constant as life and unbroken as the light. And we pray that Thou wouldst help us more wisely than we have done in the past to understand Thy meaning in Thy various dealings with us, that we may not be smitten down by overmuch sorrow, nor embittered by disappointments or losses or pains, nor swept away by joys or prosperity of any kind, but in all things we may be able to recognise the Father's hand, and to believe with all our hearts that howsoever He changes His methods, His purpose is always the same, that

we might be partakers of His holiness and so of His blessedness.

We thank Thee, O Lord! this evening that Thou dost open the gates of Thy house, and of Thy heart to us waiting here before Thee. We bless Thee for the opportunity of turning away from daily cares and earthly occupations and enjoyments, and finding that our true rest is in being beside God. May we always feel that; and may we this evening, in our hour of worship, realise very closely and very blessedly how near Thou art to us, and how gracious Thou art. We thank Thee that no consciousness of evil need trouble us, but need only bring us nearer to Thyself, with Whom is all the power to cleanse away all our sin. Help us, we beseech Thee, day by day, to be of those labouring husbandmen who shall partake of the fruit. May we strive lawfully that we may be crowned. May we, as Christ's servants and soldiers, keep our hearts from being entangled with the affairs of this life; howsoever our hands and our thoughts are occupied necessarily with these, may Thy presence in them all preserve them from becoming snares to us. And may we thus live as becomes those who are walking after the example of that great Saviour, and looking to His hand to give them the crown of life.

We desire to commend one another to Thy care, in all the variety of our needs which Thou knowest better than we know them, about each other or concerning ourselves. And we pray that whatever may be the character of Thy present dealing with us Thy present gifts to us may fit our present wants. We bless Thee that we can be sure that wheresoever Thou dost come with the rod, Thou comest also with the Spirit of healing; that Thou art ever ready, when Thy servants

recognise Thy hand, to bind up the wounds which Love has made. We pray, then, that Thou wouldst grant to each of us the encouragement and the consolation that we require; and, above all, that Thou wouldst help us more and more, as life goes on with us, 'to live soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world'; ever looking for, and hasting to, the day of the Lord Jesus.

O Lord! let the rich blessing of Thy manifest Spirit attend all the work that we try to do in Thy Name. Gather in to Thy fold and Kingdom many souls as the fruits of the ministry of Thy word among us. And do Thou build up Thy people in their most holy faith; and grant that all of us, reunited here in the bonds of Christian worship and society, may more and more live in the world, and do our little tasks with the Spirit of Christ in our hearts, and the likeness of Christ manifested in our lives and actions.

We commit ourselves now to Thy gracious care, O Lord! and beseech Thee to accept us, to forgive our many sins, and to grant us Thy gracious presence and blessing, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXLVII

O Lord! Who hast an ear to hear, a heart to love, a hand to help, we come to Thee. May it not be in outward form only, may our hearts draw near; and let the light of Thy felt love shine upon all our darkness and change it into light.

Bless us gathered here this evening, and let the power of the Lord be felt among us. Breathe upon all our hearts, and let Thy word run and be glorified. Do Thou open our hearts to receive Thy blessing, and Thy hand to bestow whatsoever good we most need;

and, above all, O Lord! help us to make Thee our Portion, and give us Thyself. We ask all through Him in Whom Thou hast given the gift unspeakable; even Christ our Saviour.

CXLVIII

O Lord, our gracious God! we would bow before Thee with our poor praises, for surely Thou hast been merciful to us; and we too can feel that all our thankfulness is poor compared with Thine infinite gift. May we all indeed be able to say that we are

'Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven.'

Thou art waiting to do these great things for us all, and if we are not yet set free from our bondage and our burdens, nor cured of the diseases of heart and mind, nor walking in the sunshine of Thy felt love, we ourselves, and only we ourselves, are the cause. We would come to Thee, then, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst strengthen every one of us to take Jesus Christ for the Saviour of our souls and the Master of our lives. May the deepest voice of every heart here be, 'Lord! what would Thou have me to do?' Thou dost answer such a question ever. Thou dost not leave the heart that would fain obey, in ignorance and perplexity. Thou dost reveal Thy will to them who will to do it. May each of us more and more be led to take all our life's commandments from Thyself, and, knowing these things, to have the blessedness of those that do them.

Bless each of us according to all our differences of character and present circumstances. Thou knowest

our hearts; blessed be Thy Name! we can believe that Thou lovest better, as well as more wisely, than the dearest do, or than we do ourselves. Do Thou give to us each the gifts that we most need. Help us rightly to understand what these are. Especially we would pray for the young persons of this congregation, and beseech Thee that they may be led to cry unto Thee, 'My Father! Thou art the Guide of my youth!' Oh! keep them from the slippery places in which many of them may stand. Grant them the grace to begin right, that they may be innocent from much transgression, and may not mar their consciences and their hearts by the knowledge of our sin. We pray Thee to keep them from the paths of the destroyer, and grant that they may seek wisdom early and find her, and all her rich treasures. If there are any of them here alone in this great city, and tempted by its abounding evils; if there are any young men here whose feet had wellnigh gone, and their steps almost slipped, O Lord! do Thou help them to recover themselves, and to stand fast in resisting the evil that seeks to suck them into its whirlpool. If there are any of them that are groping in perplexity as to what they shall think of Thee and of Thy Revelation in Jesus Christ, lead such, we pray Thee, to that knowledge, better than all head-knowledge, of the loving Lord as the Person Whom to know and love are life eternal. And whatever may be the condition of any, do Thou shape Thy gifts to their condition.

Grant us, we pray Thee, this evening, some words to speak that shall have in them the power of Thy word, and shall not be forgotten, nor cast upon the waters in vain. Prosper Thy word in the thing whereto Thou hast sent it, and give us the message that may reach

many hearts, and be found after many days bringing forth the fruit of righteousness.

We pray for any in our number who may be in sorrow or trouble. We commend to Thee the sick and all who may be in suffering and pain. We pray that Thou wouldst spare useful lives, and give Thy servants on their sick-beds to realise the faithful promise that Thou wilt make all their bed in their weakness.

To Thee we commend ourselves now, thanking Thee for all Thy past mercy, beseeching Thy forgiveness of our past unworthiness, and praying that the days which may yet remain to us, be they few or many, may be filled with the light of Thy love, and with our strenuous endeavours to do Thy holy will. Oh hear us now, pardon all our evil, grant us Thy presence in this hour, and accept us through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXLIX

O LORD! we bless Thee that we can call Thee our God, and that Thou dost call us Thy people. May we deserve the name more, and yield ourselves more entirely to be possessed by Thee, and to be guided and commanded by Thee. And help us to make Thee our portion, that whatever else we may call ours we may truly possess the true riches. All others pass away from us, or we from them. None of them is enough for us, but Thou art enough. May our hearts cleave to Thee, and our wills bow to Thee. May our thoughts fix on Thee. May our lives, which are from Thee, be devoted to Thee, and live by and in Thee. Be Thou the strength of our lives, and their exceeding great Reward; then

we shall not be afraid when evil days come, and Thou wilt strengthen our hearts if we wait on Thee. So we would lift up our hearts to Thee now, O Lord! and pray Thee to be very near to each of us, and to bless us in this hour's worship. How many mercies we have for which to thank Thee since we gathered here last. How many blessings Thou hast rained upon us; how many dangers Thou hast kept us from; how many impulses towards good Thou hast breathed into our hearts; how much of Thy restraining grace Thou hast cast around us, and how Thou hast ordered all the providences of our lives for our highest good. May we be less blind to Thy daily dealings with us, and to the patient love which travels with us all through life's journey, and at every moment cares for us. Accept our thanks for Thy daily blessings, and teach us, O Lord! that higher wisdom which will count among these, even the dark and sad hours which Thou dost bring to us too. We bless Thee that Thou dost never stay far away from hearts that are in sorrow, and we beseech Thee that when our turn comes we may never seek to bear our burden alone, nor to weep tears which we do not wish Thy hand to wipe away.

Be very merciful to us, and let a blessing from Thyself come down upon us, quickening in us all that is best, and weakening whatever is wrong, and contrary to Thy holy will.

O Lord! we thank Thee for the break in the midst of life's daily duties which this gathering together gives to us. Grant, we pray Thee, that it may indeed be for the better and not for the worse that we thus assemble. Let Thy Spirit be upon us. May we always come together in the Name, and if in that Name assembled may we find Christ's presence in the midst, making us

one because we all partake of that one blessed life. Accept these our prayers, O Lord! cleanse our hearts from all their evil; quicken us by some holy, elevating, and true thoughts of Thee. May life become brighter to our view, duties be clearer and easier, and hopes fairer and more solid by reason of our gathering together. Hear us, O Lord! pour Thy Spirit upon us, for without it we are all poor and empty; with it we are full and rich. Answer our petitions, O Lord! for our Saviour Christ's sake.

CL

O Lord, our God! we humbly ask from Thee Thy help that we too may be enrolled in that great army of the soldiers of the faith, and may follow the footsteps of the Captain of our salvation. We beseech Thee for grace more and more to set steadfastly before us 'the things not seen as yet,' and to walk in the light of Thy countenance shining on our inmost hearts. We pray that for us earth may be less, and God and righteousness more. We pray that Thou wouldst strengthen us to lay hold of the better things which Thou hast provided for us, and casting aside not only plain and manifest evils, but weights that may hinder us to run with patience and perseverance the race that is set before us. Blessed be Thy Name for all the witnesses to Thy faithfulness and to the wisdom of such lives which compass us round about. May we gather from them such stimulus and help as they can supply, but may our eyes ever be fixed upon Christ the Lord, Who Himself hath said, 'I will put my trust in Him.' Give us grace to live lives of faith that we may live lives of peace, and power, and purity.

Help each of us according to our several parts in this service which we have to fill. Help us to hear aright, O Lord! May no familiarity with the outward word, nor any judgment of the human medium of it, come between any of us and Thine own truth, which ought to be our life and our joy. Do Thou speak to us this morning in him that speaks, and let His word have free course, because it is Thy word; and be glorified.

Father of all mercies! we commend one another to Thy gracious care. In Thy rich and abundant stores there are varieties of supply suited to all the diversities of our circumstances. So whatever our condition, may we help one another by bespeaking for each other Thy appropriate aid. Be near each of us as we may severally require; to those of us who may be in sorrow, burdened by cares, or with bleeding hearts and tearful eyes, we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst manifest Thyself as able to give to each mourning heart much more than these for the loss of which it may mourn. We pray that whatever be the character of our present condition Thou wouldst draw near to each of us, and as Thou dost shape all the dealings of Thy hand with us in order that they may afford to Thee opportunities for drawing near to us, may we all open our hearts to the teaching of the moment's circumstances, and in Thee find some revelation of Thy presence, and some communication of Thy gracious help.

We beseech Thee to bless all our friends, all whom we love and carry in our hearts, all whose love makes the preciousness of earthly life. Bless them and us in our various conditions and duties. Help us in all the tasks of our daily life; may the ladder whose feet

are on earth have its top close by Thy face in Heaven. We pray Thee to guide this nation in all the complications of present conditions. Give peace in our time, O Lord! and scatter the people that delight in war. Send forth Thy light and Thy truth to bring order into the confusion, and love into the selfishness of human affairs and the pursuits of the kingdoms. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless Thy people throughout the world, and give them grace to understand the times, and to know the tasks that the day lays upon them. And do Thou grant a deeper consciousness of Thy presence to all professing Christians, and grace to live lives that shall be more conformed to their profession, and shall adorn the teaching.

Hear us now, O Lord! accept all our prayers and praises through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

CLI

O Lord, our God! we would claim Thee for ours, and ask Thee to help us to make ourselves Thine. Thou hast made a covenant with us, and we ask Thee that all its articles may be fulfilled in our experience. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst write Thy law upon our hearts, and by Thy gracious moving on the springs of our actions, on our affections and our wills, help us to love what Thou dost command, and to delight in obedience. We pray Thee to teach us by the inward voice all that Thou wouldst have us to do. May we carry our counsel and commander within ourselves, and that not merely the voice of our own judgment or conscience, but the voice of our Saviour speaking in these. We plead with Thee that Thou wouldst help

us to yield ourselves to Thee in full surrender, and make ourselves Thy people because Thou hast unveiled to us the greatness of Thy love in the perfect gift of Thyself in Jesus Christ. We thank Thee that we can say 'The God of Jacob is our Refuge; the Lord of Hosts is with us.' May that be the deep conviction of us all, and may we feel after all hours of temptation or weakness or manliness, that if God is the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever, we cannot be poor or altogether sad, or at all solitary. We pray Thee to teach us all to know Thee, not only with the hearing of the ear, but with the loving familiarity wherewith we are acquainted with those that are dearest to us here; and as a man speaketh with his friend so do Thou speak to us. Make us Thy friends; and give us that knowledge which is heart-work, and is life eternal, and the possession of Thyself. And as the foundation of all, O Lord! we ask that Thou wouldst be merciful to our iniquities and wouldst remember our sins no more. We have wandered from Thy ways, and have built up great black barriers between us and Thee which we cannot overthrow nor overpass. But we bless Thee that Thou canst, and we pray that Thy great mercy in Jesus Christ our Saviour may come to our sinful hearts as a true gospel, and that we may be delivered from the guilt and power of all our transgressions. O Lord! Thou hast pledged Thyself to these mercies, and Thou canst not but grant them when men ask Thee. Thou hast sealed Thy promises with the ordinances that are settled in Heaven; and we beseech Thee that Thy loving-kindness and faithfulness, which were before the heavens and the stars, may abide and work for each of us after the earth and the heavens are laid

aside as a vesture, and all through Thine eternal years which are the same.

In Thy great mercy, O Lord! accept our petitions; for have they not been the giving to Thee back of Thine own promises. Thou art the faithful God, keeping covenant to a thousand generations. Bless and hear us now, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

CLII

O LORD! help us, we beseech Thee, that knowing these things as we do, we may all possess the benediction and the happiness of those that do them. And may our lives be more and more shaped after the likeness of that Lord, and we do to one another as He has done for us all. Destroy, we pray Thee, by the power of Christ's received love, our own natural selfishness. And may we learn and practise the lesson that the higher we are the more opportunity have we for stooping to serve. Grant us thus, O Lord! that our Christianity may not only be resting on Jesus Christ and His work, but walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and the imitations of His work.

And now, Lord! because from Thee must come the grace of hearing and of speaking, we would look up to Thee for both according to our several parts in this service; beseeching Thee that Thou wouldst deliver us from any of the temptations that may attach to each special portion of it; and that Thou wouldst bless the provisions of Thy house, and make them precious and dear even to some who have little taste for them.

O Lord! Thou knowest all our conditions, our characters, our weaknesses, our past. We bless Thee that

we can rest fully in Thy perfect love, and we pray that we may be able to do so, however difficult it may be at any time by reason of whatever may confront or harass us. Guide us in all our ways by Thy counsel, help us to be Thy faithful servants and soldiers. May little duties become great and solemn when we think of them as enjoined by Thee. And may great annoyances or small ones become smaller still when we think of them as sent by Thee, and as borne by us in fellowship with Thee.

We pray that if any of us have any special burdens of sorrow or care, perplexity or grief, Thou wouldst speak to our hearts. Thou art wont to lead us into the wilderness when Thou dost speak very tenderly to us. May we never lose the sweetness of Thy whispers, and help us, in all the commonplace duties and solemn monotony of our daily work that we may fashion it all by thoughts of Thee, and may live, not as do those whose vision is bounded by the things unseen and eternal.

Look upon us now this evening. Give us Thy blessing in our worship, speak Thou in our hearts by human lips, if it please Thee, and let the word of the Lord be magnified, and men's hearts be swayed and melted to love and obedience to Jesus Christ; through whom we offer every prayer.

CLIII

O Lord, our most gracious God! we thank Thee that we, in some measure, know Thy Name. We beseech Thee that since Thou hast declared it unto us all in Christ Thy Son, we may learn more and more of its sweetness and its power. 'Not unto us, O Lord!

but unto Thine own Name give the glory,' for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake.

We come all unworthy and laden with burdens of guilt and evil, as well as of care and work; and we beseech Thee that, because Thou art what Thou art, and hast revealed Thyself to us as Love and Pity and Grace, Thou wouldst draw near to each of us now, and pour upon us the tide of Thy grace and pity and love. O Lord! we thank Thee that we do not need to try and make out a case that shall prevail with Thee; we thank Thee that we can come fully, or at least in some measure conscious of our demerit and our lowliness, and yet can rise above all that consciousness into the light of faith in Thyself, and pray that the assurance that we shall be heard, that Thou wilt give unto us according to Thine own gracious purposes and large heart of love even to us unworthy. Clothe us, then, we beseech Thee, with strength. Put upon us the robe of righteousness. Help us, by Thy continual aid, to make ourselves more and more what Thou wouldst have us to be. In our daily life may Thy presence be increasingly felt. May it be more and more true of us every day that the lives which we live in the flesh are lived by the faith of the Son of God. And do Thou mould our characters into fair forms, far beyond our own attainment of likeness to Him in Whom Thou dost delight that Thou mightest delight in us too; and we as Thy beloved children may be imitators of God, and walk in love as He hath loved us. We bring this, the whole burden of our weakness and our failures and our sin, and pray that Thou wouldst deal with them as we can not. We pray Thee to root in our hearts more and more the consciousness of Thy sweet presence, and that Thou wouldst help us, wherever we go, to take

God with us, and whatever we do, to do it in His Name. We ask Thee not only for forgiveness. Thou art rich in mercy, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in Thy loving-kindness unto all them that call upon Thee. But we pray for deliverance from every form and trace of evil, and beseech Thee to help us to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.

And we pray this morning for that help from Thee without which our words are but as 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.' We often draw near to Thee in outward form, and our hearts are far from Thee. We pray that it may not be so to-day, but that all of us, from whatever kind of homes we have come, and whatever circumstances in life have been pressing upon us, may this morning indeed draw very near to Thee, and find that there comes grace and power and peace into our hearts when we touch Thy heart. And now cleanse us from all our evil, 'draw us and we will run after Thee,' for Thou dost help our wills and our feet. Be present in all the ordinances of Thy house, and grant to each of us some touch of the live coal from the altar, laid upon our lips, and of the flaming love of Jesus Christ kindling by this touch our hearts. And for our Lord Christ's sake hear us, and grant us Thy gracious presence and help.

CLIV

O Lord, our gracious God! help us that we may abide in Thy love, and bring forth fruit by our true union with Jesus Christ the Vine. Grant that we may have Thy help so that we may never wander away, in thought or deed, from Him; and that we may have the continual peace, the abiding joy, the unfailing

strength, which fellowship with Him ministers to the weakest, the most troubled, the most sad. O Lord! draw near and minister to each of us from Thine own infinite variety of gifts that which we most specially require for the moment. Draw near to the sad and the solitary. Speak Thy peace to any troubled hearts. Reveal the sufficiency of Thy love to those who may have been stripped of earthly comforts. And be Thou the strong Stay round which bruised plants may twine themselves, and the tendrils of our hearts may cling. And do Thou lift us thereby out of the dust, and preserve us from casting away our confidence which hath, and shall have, great recompense of reward.

O Lord! bless us in our worship this morning; be near us that we may hear Thy voice; speak what we need. May it be true of us that what we hear in the ear we proclaim on the house-tops. And may Thy message manifest itself to be Thine by the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power in many hearts.

We commend one another to Thy care. We pray Thee to bless all our brethren throughout the world, gathered together in divers communions, and worshipping Thee in many tongues and many fashions. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw all Thy servants nearer to one another, and wouldst help them all to press closer to the centre, that so they may be closer to each other. Bless the work of all good people who are trying to do Thy will in any fashion, and prosper all their efforts in whatever way they may be put forth. Make men better, wiser, and happier, and more as Thou wouldst have them to be. Further Thy Kingdom upon the earth, we beseech Thee. May it spread over the whole world, and may obedience to Thy will sink deep into every heart. May Thy

Kingdom grow like a great tree. May it leaven the mass, like the leaven working within.

Accept us as we come to Thee now, forgive our many sins, grant us Thy presence and gracious help in our worship, and receive our petitions through Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

CLV

TEACH us, O Lord! how to pray. We would draw near to Thee now, and ask for Thy help to feel how close Thou art to us, and to open our hearts that Thou mayst be still closer. We bless Thee that while we have to bow before Thee with very lowly hearts, and knowing something of the infinite distance between Thy holiness and us, we can come to Thee with the confidence of children; and sure, though it be with lowly hope, since Thou hast come so very near to us, and dost speak to our hearts daily, not only by Thy providences, which often need an interpreter, but in Thy dear Son Who has declared Thy Name unto us in His brethren. We beseech Thee that we may indeed learn all the syllables of Thy great Name, and chiefly that we may never lose our hold on the plain truth that God is Love. We thank Thee that it is plain when we look upon Jesus Christ, however blurred it may seem when we look elsewhere; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us, though we see so many confusions, and experience as well as behold so many things which sometimes appear to give the lie to our faith, yet we pray that Thou wouldst help us, looking upon Thy dear Son and penetrating more deeply into the glad mystery of His work and relation to us, to rejoice in the full confidence that nothing can

separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. O Lord! we might separate ourselves, for many an evil is in our hearts, in our lives, and these do come between us and Thee, though—blessed be Thy Name—we do not need to fear that they come between Thee and us. But we pray for Thy help to sweep away every obstacle, barrier, and veil, and to live more constantly than we have done in the past in the full sunshine, and to rejoice always in the Lord. Cleanse our hearts, we pray Thee, fix our wills upon Thyself, help us more and more to deny ourselves all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world. Do Thou deliver us from the folly of looking only on the things that are seen. May our sight be better than that, and be able to see the things that are unseen. And we pray Thee to be near us day by day; when it is harder for us to keep in such a temper than it is now, when things round about us help us. We pray that our week may be more like our Sundays, and our Sundays more what Thou wouldst have them to be. We pray that we may find in the worship of Thy house, not a substitute for, but a help towards, continual worship, and abide in the house of the Lord all the days of our lives. We beseech Thee that what we profess to-day we may practise to-morrow. We pray that we may all through our lives bear about with us the remembrance and the love, the faith, and the hope, which this day and its associations are meant to kindle in our hearts.

Be Thou near us, O Lord! in our worship of this day. We would cast ourselves upon Thy faithful promises, and plead these, for hast Thou not said that when we call Thou dost answer, and *before* we call

Thou dost answer, and whilst we are yet speaking Thou wilt hear? May it be so with us to-day, that we may not only come into Thy presence with petitions, but bear hence the answers and the gifts.

We pray Thee, O Lord! that Thou wilt help us to treasure all Thy past mercies in grateful hearts, and that they may have their due influence upon us, that the goodness of God may indeed lead us, not only to repentance, but to loyal love, freed trust, and good and unbroken obedience. Hear us in our petitions, mercifully forgive all our sins, and answer and be with us now, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CLVI

O LORD, our merciful Father! look upon us, we beseech Thee, bowing once more before Thee, and give as Thou hast so often given in the past, answers of peace to Thy servants. We commend to Thy care all here this morning, according to our different necessities and circumstances. Shape Thy gifts to each of us. We bless Thee, that in Thy great storehouse there are supplies for all wants, balm for every wound, comfort for all sorrows, help for every duty, and grace sufficient for all our needs. May we receive more and more of Thy fulness, being more and more capable of receiving Thy best gifts, because we open our hearts by faith, and keep them open by righteous living. We pray Thee to comfort any of us that need Thy consolations in any special manner, to enlighten any darkened understandings, to deliver any tempted hearts, to show the path to perplexed spirits, and to be the Companion of all the lonely, and the Comforter of all the sad. We beseech Thee to strengthen each of us day by

day for our duties, and to help us, doing them, to rise above them, and by means of these, the changing necessities connected with this fleeting life, to become more fully and surely the heirs of God and the possessors of the eternal things. We pray that Thou wouldst lead us all by Thy counsel, that Thou wouldst help us to be teachable and recipient of it. Lift us above ourselves, and set us free from the bonds of any evil habit, and reveal to us the unsuspected deficiencies and faults of our lives and characters; and make us supremely willing to sacrifice all things which come between us and Thee.

And now, Lord! guide all the thoughts of hearer and speaker. Help us this day, not in mere outward form but in the very depths of our hearts to worship God, and wait for His voice. We commend ourselves to Thy gracious care, and we beseech Thee to bless, as we have asked Thee for ourselves, all those that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and to look upon those who, to their own harm and loss, have not yet learned to love and trust Thee. Let Thy Kingdom come; let Thy will be done; let Thy Name be hallowed all through this weary world, that it may become the gate of Heaven.

Hear us, O Lord! in our petitions; in Thy great mercy forgive and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

School of Theology
at Claremont

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